

1560

# THE MONTH

FEBRUARY 1956

COMMENT

**PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA AND  
HUMAN DIGNITY**

RUSSELL KIRK

**THE QUESTION OF WELFARE**

C. C. MARTINDALE

**THE HUNTING OF THE HOBBIT**

*A Reply to Fr. A. A. Stephenson*

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## COMMENT

IN A COUNTRY whose way of life is based on respect for the inalienable rights of the individual as a child of God, and where the authority of government depends, not on its power to coerce, but on the esteem in which it is held, the free expression of opinion is as inevitable as it is desirable. Even in a modern post-Christian parliamentary democracy, the power of whose executive to enforce its authority is infinitely greater than that of the most despotic of old-fashioned "absolute" monarchies, there is no reason for interpreting disunity among its ruling politicians as evidence of the instability of the régime. But in a totalitarian society, which both disregards man's natural rights and makes it a criminal offence for the citizen to express disapproval of the government, the monolithic unity of the ruling party is quite indispensable to the survival of the régime: and, since even fully indoctrinated Bolsheviks are burdened with the frailties and the ambitions of common humanity, there is only one means whereby this unity can be realised in practice: the tyranny of the party bosses over the rank and file.

Less than three years after the October revolution Lenin wrote: "Certainly almost everyone now realises that the Bolsheviks could not have maintained themselves in power for two and a half years, and not even for two and a half months, without the strictest discipline, the truly iron discipline in our Party." Lenin realised, perhaps better than any of his contemporaries, how instinctive, spontaneous and widespread would be the opposition to Soviet Communism. In his own words, "the dictatorship of the proletariat is a persistent struggle—sanguinary and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative—against the forces and traditions of the old society. The force of habit of millions and of tens of millions is a terrible force. Without an iron party . . . it is impossible to conduct such a struggle successfully. It is a thousand times easier to vanquish the centralised big bourgeoisie than to 'vanquish' millions and millions of small proprietors, who by their everyday, imperceptible, elusive, demoralising activity achieve the *very* results desired by the bourgeoisie and which *restore* the bourgeoisie

[i.e., a property-owning society]." Lenin therefore proceeds to reiterate and emphasise his main thesis: "Whoever in the least weakens the iron discipline of the party . . . (especially during its dictatorship) actually aids the bourgeoisie against the proletariat."

Lenin himself possessed exceptional ability as a revolutionary strategist and tactician. Since he gave unquestionable proof of his capacity by the way in which he organised both the October insurrection and the even more difficult defence of the revolution during the Civil War, his prestige within the Party was too great for his authority to be seriously disputed during the few years he survived the seizure of power. But, once he was dead, the very human ambitions of his colleagues threatened to destroy the iron discipline that he had laboured so ruthlessly to enforce. It is obvious that so long as its leading personnel were involved in a struggle for the succession there was no possibility of the Party speaking with one voice, and that, if the discipline of the Party had been thus undermined indefinitely, sooner rather than later, Russian humanity would have inevitably triumphed. It was indispensable to the survival of the régime for the mantle of Lenin's authority to fall on the shoulders of *one* of his heirs. Unwilling as were Stalin's competitors to recognise him as Lenin's successor, it is a fact that had not a ruthless successor existed, it would have been necessary for the Bolshevik Party to invent one. History shows clearly that it is altogether impossible to maintain the iron discipline of a ruling Party unless there emerges an "omnipotent" and all but deified Number One.

After the death of both Lenin and Stalin, their former colleagues proceeded to rediscover the fiction of "collective security." In the interregnum between Lenin's death and the assumption of full authority by Stalin, there was no other formula whereby the appearance of Party unity could be maintained for the time being. Again when Stalin died the formula was accepted, but even more willingly because none of the pretenders to Stalin's throne was prepared to recognise the right of any of his competitors to precedence without incontrovertible evidence of the need for submission.

The pretence of "collective leadership" cannot, however, be other than a temporary fiction, since the quite indispensable unity of the Party is impossible so long as the struggle for power within its ranks remains undecided. However brief the interregnum of

"collective leadership," while it lasts there must be a weakening of the régime's authority throughout the length and breadth of its subject nations. This undesired but inevitable relaxation has been interpreted by wishful Western optimists as evidence of a change of heart within the Kremlin. In fact it is but a consequence of the partial paralysis which a totalitarian authority is unable to avoid when engaged in changing its head. The truth is that, since the death of Stalin, Soviet Communism has been more vulnerable than at any time since the death of Lenin—with the possible exception of the few months in 1941-42, when the régime was saved from collapse only by the insane racialism of Rosenberg.

The year 1953, therefore, marked the beginning of opportunity for the West. To have an opportunity is one thing; to recognise it as such and take full advantage of it quite another. In order to prevent the opportunity from passing (for not even yet has it passed entirely) decisive and resolute action is necessary. Above all it is essential that Western diplomacy should take the greatest pains to show that the West is the ally of all oppressed peoples struggling for liberty. It can do this by distinguishing carefully between the Soviet government and its subjects, and by refusing any economic or political concessions to the Kremlin without tangible evidence of the restoration of at least partial freedom to its slaves. From 1953 onwards the West should have redoubled its efforts to gain both the ear and the confidence of the oppressed people beyond the Iron Curtain by waging a colder than ever war against the Soviet Government. Instead, alas, the very opposite was done. By extending the hand of friendship and the offer of peaceful co-existence to Stalin's successors, the West indicated to the helpless victims of Soviet tyranny the pointlessness of their looking for deliverance either to London or to Washington. Now Bulganin and Khrushchev with consummate craft have exploited Western folly, and the hopes entertained by the oppressed on the morrow of Stalin's death are making way for despair. The interregnum of "collective leadership" shows signs of coming to an end with the emergence of Bulganin and Khrushchev as the triumphant duumvirate within the régime. At the same time, Soviet initiative has thrown the Near Eastern sector of the N.A.T.O. front into utter confusion, and, in Europe itself, not excluding Western Germany, the danger of

Communist subversion has increased so considerably that the whole of Western unity is in peril of being torn asunder.

It is not in the least surprising that, in an interview with Mr. Charles Shutt of the American Telenews Agency on the last day of last year, M. Bulganin proposed a second meeting at the Summit, for the advantages of the Geneva spirit to the Kremlin are now obvious to all but the wilfully blind. Writing in the *American New Leader* of 12 December, 1955, Salvador de Madariaga summed up the significance of Geneva, 1955, in the following words: "Moscow calculated its moves with its usual acumen. A vast dust cloud of co-existence, friendship and relaxation of tension was to create a new atmosphere so as to achieve a number of results in that more or less vaguely defined way which has been peculiar to world politics since the advent of the masses to a share in it. Two results were in particular envisaged. One was the furthering of popular fronts in Italy and in France by creating an international 'climate' that would make it difficult to keep the Communists of those two countries ostracised as they now are. The other was to undermine further the faith in the West which still lingers in the Eastern European peoples."

Disastrous as would be the effects of a second Summit conference to the cause of Western unity, the consequences of a redistillation of the Geneva spirit would be no less tragic for the subject peoples of the Kremlin. Just as Geneva, 1955, enables Bulganin and Khrushchev to out-manoeuvre their fellow pretenders, a second Geneva would provide a reasonably safe context for the liquidation of the last vestiges of "collective leadership," that is, Party disunity, and for ending the duumvirate by permitting one of the duumvirs to establish his undivided authority as Autocrat of all the Russians. That achieved, the day of reckoning would be at hand; the régime would have regained its full offensive capacity for war on its enemies within and without its far-flung frontiers.

For that reason the possibility of a repetition of the disastrous farce of 1955 must under no circumstances be even countenanced by the West. For the same reason, it is to be hoped that henceforth the West will refrain from actions and words calculated to give added prestige to any of Stalin's former satraps. It is, for example, simply fatuous to argue that we must proceed with the plans for the reception of Bulganin and Khrushchev, lest our



refusal to do so be interpreted as "bad manners." Such niceties are quite ridiculous in dealing with Soviet thugs. If, notwithstanding their insolent behaviour in the course of their grand tour of India and Burma, the duumvirs are made welcome on British soil, their reception here will inevitably be interpreted by the world at large as evidence of British weakness and of Soviet strength, and it will be understood by the oppressed within the Soviet empire as further proof of the futility of looking hopefully to the West.

To appreciate fully the danger of completely isolating the West from its natural allies beyond the Iron Curtain, there is need to recall the experience of the millions of Soviet slaves who have already looked in vain for evidence of "Western" good faith. In 1941 the people of the Ukraine greeted the German invaders as liberators; they offered them the traditional bread and salt, only to find that it was the policy of Nazi Germany to perpetuate the hated collective farms and make their country a vast slave colony to be exploited for the Third Reich. Hundreds of thousands of Red Army soldiers surrendered their arms in the hope of using them eventually in the liberation of their fatherland, but Germany was unwilling to use their services until it was too late. Then, after Hitler was defeated, the victorious British and American Governments dealt with these rebels against Soviet tyranny even more harshly—they were repatriated at the bayonet point and then put to death by the Soviet authorities. The Ukrainian peasant, like all sons of the soil, is essentially practical. He is deprived of reliable information and he can form an opinion of the West only in the light of his own and his neighbours' experience. To him the difference between the Third Reich and the N.A.T.O. powers must appear too subtle to place much hope in either Britain or America. His scepticism concerning Western good has surely been increased by the recent coexistentialist farce, reminding him of the Soviet-German pact of 1939.

The West cannot afford thus to be misunderstood by its allies. Every doubt concerning Western intentions in the mind of a Ukrainian or Chinese peasant is worth an armoured division to the Kremlin. It is therefore devoutly to be wished that the West may take seriously to heart the warning of Pope Pius XII in his allocution of Christmas Eve, 1955, concerning the dangers of

seeking to co-exist with the Godless oppressors of Eurasia. It may be too much to expect post-Christian governments to base their policies on the advice of the Holy See, but there is certainly no justification for Catholics harbouring the illusions which obsess the post-Christian mind. The present Holy Father has sought repeatedly to exorcise the spectre of Marxism from the minds of Christians, but on Christmas Eve, 1955, he went a stage further and gave Catholics the world over a five-point plan for peace and liberty which, if taken seriously, can yet save mankind from the consequences of twentieth-century folly.

## PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA AND HUMAN DIGNITY

By

RUSSELL KIRK

**R**ECENTLY I re-read one of the most influential orations in all history, Pico's "On the Dignity of Man." Christian humanism is coming into its own again, in some quarters; and that strange and wonderful being Pico della Mirandola would find it more to his taste than all the vaunting doctrines of intellectual emancipation which are confusedly attributed to his school.

"The enduring value of Pico's work is due, not to his Quixotic quest of an accord between Pagan, Hebrew, and Christian traditions," John Addington Symonds writes, "but to the noble spirit of confidence and human sympathy with all great movements of the mind, which penetrates it." Out of the bulk of the works of Count Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, who challenged the doctors of the schools to dispute with him on nine hundred grave questions, the only production widely read nowadays is



this brief discourse, "The Dignity of Man," delivered by him in 1486, at Rome, when he was but twenty-four years old. The oration, his glove dashed down before authority, lives as the most succinct expression of the mind of the Renaissance.

Pico, a son of the princely house of Mirandola, one of the most brilliant of the great Renaissance families, studied at Bologna, and wandered through the Italian and French universities for seven years, becoming immensely adroit and immensely erudite, proficient in Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Chaldee, and Arabic. Mystic, magician, and grand scholar, he combined in his character the Gothic complexity of the Middle Ages with the egoism and enlightenment of the Renaissance. He was the most romantic of all the humanists. His immense design it was to effect a synthesis and reconciliation of Hebrew, classical, and Christian traditions. No one did more than Pico to restore Plato to dignity in the schools; yet, as Symonds observes, "uncontrolled by critical insight, and paralysed by the prestige attaching to antiquity, the Florentine school [which Pico and Ficino dominated] produced little better than an unintelligent eclecticism." Among Pico's nine hundred questions were some propositions which hung close upon the brink of heresy. He thought that the secrets of the magicians could prove the divinity of Christ, and that the Cabala of the medieval Jews would sustain the Christian mysteries. Thus, haranguing, reading, wandering, preaching, commencing a vast work against the enemies of Christianity, he spent his brief life, dying of a fever before he was thirty—though he already had abjured the world and the flesh, and planned to wander barefoot as an evangelist.

Now this eccentric genius's "Dignity of Man" is the manifesto of humanism. Man regenerate—"this, visibly," Egon Freidell says, "is the primary meaning of the Renaissance: the rebirth of man in the likeness of God." The man of the Middle Ages was humble, conscious almost always of his fallen and sinful nature, feeling himself a miserable, foul creature watched by an angry God. Through pride fell the angels. But Pico and his brother-humanists declared that man was only a little lower than the angels, a being capable of descending to unclean depths, indeed, but also having it within his power to become godlike. How marvellous and splendid a creature is man! This is the theme of Pico's oration, elaborated with all the pomp and confidence that characterised

the rising humanist teachers. "In this idea," continues Freidell, "there lay a colossal *hybris* unknown to the Middle Ages, but also a tremendous spiritual impulse such as only modern times can show."

The very cherubim and seraphim must endure the equality of man, if man cultivates his intellectual faculty. It is the spirit, the spark of Godhood, which raises man above all the rest of creation and makes him distinct in kind from all other living things. For all his glorification of man, however, Pico has no touch of the modern notion that "man makes himself," and that an honest God's the noblest work of man. It is only because man has been created in the image of God that man is almost angelic. God, in His generosity, has said to man, "We have made thee neither of heaven nor of earth, neither mortal nor immortal, so that with freedom of choice and with honour, as though the maker and moulder of thyself, thou mayest fashion thyself in whatever shape thou shalt prefer. Thou shalt have the power to degenerate into the lower forms of life, which are brutish. Thou shalt have the power, out of thy soul's judgment, to be reborn into the higher forms, which are divine."

This, then, is the essence of humanism, which spread out of Italy unto the whole of Europe, reaching its culmination, perhaps, in Erasmus and St. Thomas More. (More it was who translated the *Life* of Pico by his nephew Giovanni Francisco.) God had given man great powers, and with those powers, free will. Man might rightfully take pride in his higher faculty, and turn his faculties to the praise and improvement of noble human nature. A world of wonder and discovery lay before the Renaissance humanist. Yet all this dignity of human nature is the gift of God: the spiritual and rational powers neglected—and through free will man is all too able to neglect them—man sinks to the level of the brutes. The humanist does not seek to dethrone God: instead, through the moral disciplines of *humanitas*, he aspires to struggle upward toward the Godhead.

Thus a degree of humility chastened the pride of even the most arrogant humanist of the Renaissance. But the seed of *hybris*, overweening self-confidence, was sown; and a time would come when man would take himself for the be-all and end-all; and then Nemesis would be felt once more, and . . . The end, however, is not yet. It has remained for us of the twentieth century to look

back upon the course of this *hybris*, diffused over all the world; and to see the oratorical aspirations of the humanists transformed into the technological aspirations of the modern sensual man; and to glimpse the beginning of the catastrophe, perhaps, in a handful of dust over Hiroshima, or in the leaden domination of the Soviets, or in the pornography and hysteria of the corner news kiosk. Robert Jungk, in *Tomorrow is Already Here*, describes the stage of this progress at which we have arrived: "The stake is the throne of God. To occupy God's place, to repeat His deeds, to re-create and organise a man-made cosmos according to man-made laws of reason, foresight, and efficiency"—this is the ambition of the twentieth-century energumen of progress. And to gratify this ambition, we have moved very near to the dehumanisation of man. In our lust for divine power, we have forgotten human dignity.

By "the dignity of man," Pico della Mirandola meant the high nobility of disciplined reason and imagination, human nature as redeemed by Christ, the uplifting of the truly human person through an exercise of soul and mind. He did not mean a technological or sensate triumph. "The dignity of man" is a phrase on the lips of all sorts of people nowadays, including Communist publicists; and by it, all sorts of people mean merely the gratification of the ego, the egalitarian claim that "one man is as good as another, or maybe a little better." Pico, however, knew that no being can dignify himself: dignity is a quality with which one is *invested*; it must be conferred. For human dignity to exist, there must be a Master who can raise man above the brute creation. If that Master is denied, then dignity for man is unattainable.

For despite all the cant concerning the dignity of man in our time, the real tendency of recent intellectual currents has been to sweep true human dignity down to a morass of mechanistic indignity. Joseph Wood Krutch, a generation ago, in his *Modern Temper*, described with a sombre resignation this process of degradation. Without God, man cannot aspire to rank with cherubim and seraphim. Freud convinced the crowd of intellectuals that man was nothing better than the slave of obscure and arrogant fleshly desires; Alfred Kinsey, unintentionally reducing to absurdity this denial of human dignity, advised his fellow-creatures to emulate, if not the ant, at least the snake—for man,

so the modern dogma goes, lives only to lust. In this fashion phrases linger on in men's mouths long after the object they describe has been forgotten.

Pico della Mirandola, Platonist and Christian and sorcerer and rhetorician and mystic, designed his nine hundred questions as an irrefragable proof of man's uniqueness. Emerson echoed him, five centuries after:

There are two laws discrete  
Not reconciled,—  
Law for man, and law for thing;  
The last builds town and fleet,  
But it runs wild,  
And doth the man unking.

By a discipline of the reason and the will, to make man kingly, even angelic—this was Pico's hope, and it has been the hope of all true humanists after him. Thing, nevertheless, has run wild in our time, building town and fleet, bomb and satellite; and the man has been unkinged; and human dignity is at its lowest ebb, now, when man's power over nature is at its summit. A real man, in any age, is dignified and nobly human in proportion as he acknowledges the overlordship of One greater than man. If Things are to be thrust out of the saddle once more, and Man mounted (in Pico's phrase) to "join battle as to the sound of a trumpet of war" on behalf of man's higher nature, then some of us must go barefoot through the world, like Pico, preaching against the vegetative and sensual errors of the time.

# THE QUESTION OF WELFARE

By

C. C. MARTINDALE

THE VAST WAVE of Protestant Victorian philanthropy splashed even over children, who were told to be "sorry for" and "kind to" the poor, to visit the non-infectious sick, and to hand over small amenities to those "who need them more than you." This instilled a sense of duty and unselfishness, and it was taken for granted that the Christian life involved service. Most of the larger schools maintained a Mission, or Settlement, or Club, all save one, I think, in London, where the East End magnetised the beneficent, though south of the river conditions were probably worse.<sup>1</sup> Boys were practically bound to subscribe to their Settlement: it was hoped that at least when they left school they would visit it, spend week-ends or play matches there, and even, if they became clergymen, staff the whole institution. I doubt if such enterprises made a serious impression on boys still at school; locally, the Missions worked hard philanthropically, and people had to show "respect" to clergy, who still, in Benson's day, went about the slums in silk top-hats: they cannot have touched human life at levels as deep as those reached by the Salvation Army.

In 1908 I could hear only of two Catholic schools which helped to finance an orphanage, and to board out two orphans in the country. This could hardly be expected to stimulate school-boys' social sense, but more was hoped for. Before this, however, Lady Mary Howard had begun a true "Settlement" at St. Philip's House, in Mile End Road. In time this beautiful old house was

<sup>1</sup> In May 1908 I wrote an article on School Missions in *THE MONTH*, based on literature kindly sent to me: but in the *Life of Mgr. R. H. Benson* I was able to quote letters written by him when he was curate at the Eton Mission in Hackney Wick in 1895. His account was superficial, but contemporary; when he wrote of it in his *Confessions* and *None Other Gods*, his perspective was somewhat altered.

demolished; a cinema replaced it; and despite devoted work done after Lady Mary's death, the enterprise came to an end about 1930. Two other small Settlements had been opened in Commercial Road and Millwall, but were practically private charities and did not survive. Still, as early as 1893 the Dowager Duchess of Newcastle at the request of Cardinal Vaughan started St. Anthony's Settlement on Tower Hill, but when she died in May 1913 it was left without funds. Miss Magdalen Walker, who had worked there, was an old Mayfield girl, and begged the Schools of the Holy Child to join in continuing the work. They generously responded, and on 1 October 1913, St. Anthony's became the Settlement of the Holy Child, with Mrs. Arthur Moore as President of its Council and Magdalen Walker as Warden. These two names are still held in benediction. On 22 September 1919, at the request of Cardinal Bourne, the Settlement moved to Poplar, London, E.14.

It consisted of two narrow houses in Poplar High Street, which lurks behind the vast East India Dock Road. At the back of these houses and at a lower level was a small yard; then the club-room (entered from aptly-named Cut-throat Lane); then came coal dumps, a railway, the docks and the river. After some time the club-room had to be demolished as unsafe. New rooms were built with a flat wired-in roof; a mortgage was paid off and a small maintenance fund created enabling recurrent necessities to be dealt with without appeals for help. A pleasant memory is that H.H. Pope Pius XI, wishful to present the enterprise with fifty gold sovereigns, could find only forty-nine in the Vatican and added a different gold coin to make up the fifty. In these rooms (opened on 25 November 1930) and part of the houses, the home-work of the Settlement was done—classes, clinics, dances, boxing, lectures. In July 1934 the Catholic members of the visiting Australian cricketing eleven arrived; each boy was allowed to bowl one ball and have one bowled at him, and the departure took place amid scenes of delirious excitement and the smiles of the police who were needed to see the Australians across crowds happier than any they would have met at Lord's. That evening, like the rest, ended with night prayers, and the same rooms were used for week-end retreats: a corporate Communion was made at the parish church in connection with whose clergy, of course, all the Settlement work was done, especially if it was



committee-work, house-to-house visiting, expeditions to the country and so forth.

But during the Second World War bombs put an end to the Settlement and most of Poplar too. Dockland was the target and the river could not be blacked out. Afterwards it was asked: "Should the Settlement be rebuilt?" Not only that, but since the Welfare State has appeared, may not *all* "private charity" be done with? Still, we agree that Poplar will probably be transformed. An old friend who lives there tells me that an eleven-storey tower of flats is to be erected opposite his little home and that he, his wife and family will no doubt be "shifted" into it. Poplar may become hygienic, correct, and inhabited by quite a new race of men and women! To save time, we reject at once the idea that any Catholic Settlement exists merely to dispense "private charity."

We notice, however, that those responsible for Settlements or Clubs do not propose to shut down. St. Anne's Settlement in Vauxhall has actually been enlarged; the Anglican Settlement, St. Mildred's, in Poplar, which suffered severely, is being rebuilt; the Presbyterian one, partly bombed, is in fact rebuilt. The large St. Hilda's Settlement in Bethnal Green, created by the Cheltenham (girls') College, continues with a very generous programme. I am told that none of the Jewish or undenominational establishments intends to close. Nor does anyone seem to think that Clubs have had their day. Last July an appeal was made for "sponsors," who for one pound would enable a boy to enjoy for one year the "sporting, social and intellectual amenities" of one of the two hundred and seventy Clubs composing the London Federation of Boys' Clubs: their membership is some 20,000. At this "appeal" the Minister of Labour, Sir Walter Monckton, handed in a pound from the Duke of Edinburgh as well as his own. Athletes like Dr. R. Bannister, along with M.P.s, mayors of London boroughs and businessmen, were present. The President of the Federation, Field-Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck, could say that £500 of *this year's* target, £10,000, was thus ensured. Opinion, then, seems solid about the need for such centres, catering for a variety of purposes.

Since, then, it is inadmissible that Catholic boys and girls in Poplar should be left club-less or simply handed over to other Clubs however well-equipped, it may be emphasised that the

Settlement is doing a great deal of work from its temporary premises in 13 Woodstock Terrace, London, E.14. It is represented on many committees,<sup>1</sup> but while committee work is tedious, it is necessary, if only because the Catholic voice should be heard (and is usually welcomed) in "mixed" Committees; and the Care Committee worker is the one who can enter homes, and a Catholic home should be visited by a Catholic if half its special difficulties are to be appreciated.

But I would submit that while Catholic centres (Settlements or other), Clubs included, *must* survive, or be created, they will not be quite what they were, precisely because social conditions, and a social mentality, have changed.

Much stir was caused by Mrs. Berger-Hamerschlag's book, *Journey into a Fog*.<sup>2</sup> She is the daughter of a Viennese slum-doctor and a disciple of Professor F. Cicek, founder of the first children's art clubs in Vienna. Her book, picturing a year's experience in an art-class in one club, is distilled from notes taken "over a number of years from different clubs, run by the educational authority or by private enterprise." Her heroism is indisputable, especially as she may not realise that Austria, having a Catholic tradition, has too a subconscious culture far superior to ours, and that even our Protestant "culture" is practically destroyed. Her optimism may, then, have led her to expect too much too quickly. But though disillusioned, bewildered, almost desperate, she did not give up.

I asked myself why the boys and girls I used to meet before the War were so different from those whom she describes. Was it *only* because they were Catholics? Or did only a selection of "well-behaved" Catholics come to our Club, and had there been a thick unseen layer of Catholics deep in the "Fog" to whom neither priest nor Settlement-worker penetrated? Or did they behave well only when *in* the Club? (But then I met plenty, well- or ill-behaved, outside the Club, who talked about their

<sup>1</sup> Catholic Children's Care Committee. Council of the Ladies of Charity. Invalid Children's Aid Association. Divisional Committee for Stepney, Poplar, Bethnal Green and City of London (Vice-Chairman). Case Committee for Stepney (etc. as above, Chairman). Manager, Limehouse Catholic Schools. Women's Holiday Fund. Children's Country Holiday Fund (Poplar, Limehouse and Millwall). Poplar Divisional Care Committee Association. St. Bernard's Central School Care Committee (Chairman). Poplar, Limehouse and Millwall Catholic Schools Care Committees. Poplar Old People's Care Committee.

<sup>2</sup> Gollancz, 1955.



life and environment.) Or was a change beginning well before the War, but more noticeable after five and a half years' absence in Denmark? Yes; new ideas had been scratching at minds, showing themselves in a new vocabulary. Who would have expected to hear stokers and stevedores talking about "reactions," "complexes," or their "arrested adolescence"? I cannot remember much talk about Communism as such; but the sense of property was weakening (not only because the first War accustomed men to take what they could); a new mental mood was offering *reasons* for behaviour: "I only took what didn't belong to no one—only to the Firm." A Firm was impersonal, "no one": and next: "The State ought to do it for us." The "State"; another impersonality, and "for us." The idea of earning, meriting, was lost; and, of course, the idea of doing one's best; of being ashamed of what was not up to one's mark. Much had, for long, conspired to cause men to work down to a low standard instead of up to the highest possible. But the word "incentive" has long ago been forced to mean money only, and never pride in quality of work done. And machinery has destroyed craftsmanship, as tailors or shoemakers will tell you. The process began, of course, long ago, and to my mind the cinema is only now having its full effect. It has become a necessity; and though wages have gone up, parents too often let children go hungry while paying off, by instalments, their radio and indeed TV sets, though we have seen streets a-forest with TV-rods—to save face—though no set corresponded in half the houses. It is easy to see how prominent the words "tough" and "glamour" have become. These words are not just sensationalist or alarmist but correspond to realities.

Much has been said in and out of Parliament about "horror-comics." The elderly urge that "Bluebeard" never did *them* any harm. Idle argument. For while what we produce comes nowhere near what I have heard, in detail, from an American about what is meant in his country by the true horror-strip, and while the law and police can stop any general entry of such matter into this land, they cannot affect minds which equate toughness with violence.<sup>1</sup> But were those early films and tales alone responsible

<sup>1</sup> We hear that the origin of "Sexton Blake" in the '90's was already due to a wish to provide a harmless substitute for "pernicious" literature circulating among the young; and both here and in the U.S.A. at least one "religious" youth paper has to combine pictures of shootings-up and cracking of skulls with scenes from the Scriptures, etc.

for the apparition of Mrs. Berger-Hamerschlag's gangs that crash into Clubs and *coldly* break up everything they can? Or even for those hysterical tearings-up of pictures or spoilings with paint or ink even what a boy himself had made? True, destructiveness gives a sense of power to one who cannot create; and it is right to struggle to get these emptied minds to imagine, invent (not only copy), and to *make*. But if instability is such that even a necessary job is constantly thrown away, who will have determination to finish a task freely undertaken, if it prove difficult or disappointing?

The would-be "glamour-girl" ("I want to be a M. M.") was easily foreseen; but hardly that of the thickly-painted "dead-pan" girls, apathetic even in their love-making—"zombies," one reviewer called these Fog-girls, but this book never lacks sympathy, never is disdainful. The young people of this social layer had always, no doubt, been surrounded by a brutal pornography; but though the dregs of "Puritanism gone sour" subsist, the complete lack of reticence, here described, suggests the fading-out of moral frontiers rather than a positive increase of conscious wrong-doing. We must not cry out that the author was just unable to keep order. There was no order to keep. In fact, she took the right ways towards *creating* some order.

She is singularly supported by *The Young Worker of Today* (originally lectures at the Institute of Research into Contemporary European Affairs at Vienna) by Karl Bednarik.<sup>1</sup> His view is that *though* (I incline to say *because*) the Welfare State supplies benefits that the worker now takes for granted, and Marxism, Nazism, even Socialism, having faded into ghosts, no ideal is left. The younger generation (having lost religion and the sanctions of morality early in boy- or girl-hood), wishes now only to *take*, and asks but to escape into the illusions of cinema-life. It lives then in a spiritual vacuum. Nearer home, *Self-Portrait of Youth*, by G. W. Jordan and E. M. Fisher.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Jordan has been President of an "Institute," Miss Fisher, his assistant. They too were able to win the confidence of the members, or, at any rate, extreme frankness of talk. They were experimentalists; they approached their problem without dogma but treating the young people as adults (so they are, in harsh experience, while their "under-mind" may be but a child's): they, like Herr Bednarik, think that it is

<sup>1</sup> Faber, 1955.

<sup>2</sup> Heinemann, 1955.

"culture" which must be provided—music, sport, competitions (even examinations, with marks). But the Cultured Pagan "is not enough." Even the modern delinquent comes not from the worst homes only. "Religion" is mentioned here and there, but seems equated with "going to church." Once, however, when Miss Fisher talked about "the place of religion in the good life," a boy said to her: "The Baron (Mr. Jordan) won't half be wild if he knew you had brought in religion." And: "In other ages, when there was less education, a church-going British public were nurtured by the poetry of the English translation of the Bible. What have we put in its place? The people need poetry." No doubt. But neither is poetry "enough."

We have wanted to recall that a few Catholics have for a long time tried to reach the quite "unprivileged," and, by *living among them*, to learn to understand and love them, and possibly, to convert those who live in luxury unaware of fellow-men who have not even the necessities of life. Then, we wanted to insist that there is a thick layer of young men and women who have not only no God, but, as Mrs. Berger-Hamerschlag truly says, no "world." Life, for them, consists in machines and an almost dehumanised sexuality. Are we tempted to deny they exist? That may be because it is so rare that we meet, and, when we do, still do not reach their all-important "under-mind." (Providentially, while writing this, I received a letter saying, "I was becoming the same as *all the others* when I went to the Club hoping to get something for nothing . . . the religious aspect was just a bore . . . but slowly the sincerity of the people that ran it achieved its purpose." But that was almost thirty years ago: his "under-mind" was firmly Catholic—not that he knew anything *about* his Faith. A lasting lesson is: Never to be surprised. Jets of pure spirituality rising from the seemingly most depraved: habitual incest among the most "correct.")

It is evident that convents cannot go out into the wilderness of these Ishmaels. Priests, already over-worked, seldom can surmount the distrust, even hostility, felt for all things clerical: souls even faintly affected by that "Fog" will not be won by authority, still less by threats; they will not hear sermons or go to missions. Laymen are needed, like the Brothers of Charles de Foucauld, if possible living on the spot and even earning their living there, according

to Pius XI's dictum that "like must help like." It remains that the "indifference" (not "Indifferentism") about which the Pope himself recently spoke, has settled like a blight on so many souls that they will meet. It is not an affair of one "class" only. "Blast Christmas," said one boy in that "Fog," "I couldn't care less who was born. I wish I wasn't." How many trades-unionists never go to their meetings unless, said a leading official to me, "it's a question of their packet"! "Napoleon?" a very "well-educated" young man remarked to me, "I know nothing about him. Why should I? He's dead." And a well-balanced article by a Teaching Brother in the *South African Clergy Review*,<sup>1</sup> who writes, as we might, about the decline of the sense of responsibility, of respect for parents, of gratitude; of that absence of any reverence, let alone awe, which ought to underlie all religious and even social relationships and indeed inspires the only great art. Allowing, however, that there must still be an "under-mind," despite their emptied hearts, in these Children of the Fog, those who seek for it will evidently need a constant renewal of the Holy Spirit in themselves, a complete simplicity based upon humility, and a conviction that it is the desire of Our Lord to be "among the sons of men," especially those whose very existence we may not have guessed, and who, when met, may seem to us the most negative, the least lovable.

<sup>1</sup> May, 1955.

# THE HUNTING OF THE HOBBIT

*A Reply to Fr. A. A. Stephenson*

By

E. L. MASCALL

I HOPE I shall not appear to be merely making a debating point if I begin my reply to Fr. Stephenson's courteous and learned article<sup>1</sup> by remarking that perhaps the chief handicap with which an Anglican is faced in discussing the Roman Catholic case against Anglican orders arises from the fact that he can never be quite sure what that case is going to be. Fr. Stephenson says that I am mistaken in supposing that it is defect of intention that is in question in the present controversies about orders in the Church of England and the Church of South India: "in both, what is in question is defect of rite, particularly of the form." Nevertheless, he himself admits that the question of intention cannot be ignored; it hardly could be in view of the words which he quotes from *Apostolicae curae*: "*Cum hoc igitur intimo formae defectu conjunctus est defectus intentionis.*" Nor am I sure that all Roman Catholic theologians are as confident as he is that the question of intention is secondary. Quite recently I met the argument that the Anglican ordinals of 1550 and 1552 were perfectly sufficient, but that the willingness of the Anglican bishops at the time to use so novel a rite must be taken as evidence of a deliberate intention to exclude from the ordinations in which they used it the effect which in her ordinations the Catholic Church intends. Again, in a letter in *Theology* of November 1936, Fr. Henry St. John, O.P., introduced a distinction between internal and external intention and then argued that, while only the barest minimum of *internal* intention is needed for validity (so that the well-known statements of Bellarmine, Adrian

<sup>1</sup> THE MONTH, December, 1955.

Fortescue and others could be accepted), Anglican orders were nevertheless invalid through a defect of *external* intention, manifested by the use of a new "form or matter." That Fr. St. John's "defect of external intention" is not quite the same as Fr. Stephenson's "defect of rite" is shown by his statement that "a *person making use* of such a new form or matter does not therefore *intend* to do what the Church does" and his reference to the Reformers' "externally manifested intention in compiling *and using* the new Ordinals" (*italics mine*). I think, therefore, that the question of intention is still worth discussing.

It is perhaps well to remember that Bellarmine in a well-known passage (*De Sac. in gen.*, I, 21) lays it down that the mere introduction of a new rite does not invalidate a sacrament, even if the new rite is introduced in the erroneous belief that the Church in which the old rite was used was a false Church and not the true one, so long as it is intended to do what the true Church does, whatever that may be, and not to introduce a completely novel rite which the true Church (whatever that may be) has never known at all. This is, of course, not conclusive in the present case, for Fr. Stephenson's case against the Anglican rite is not merely that it was novel, but that it was intrinsically insufficient; nevertheless, as the main evidence of its insufficiency is alleged to be its novelty, the point made by Bellarmine is worth bearing in mind. Incidentally, it should be remembered that the form or matter used in the reformed ordinals was "new" only in a relative sense. Some of the medievals held that the imposition of hands was the matter and some that "*Accipe Spiritum Sanctum . . .*" was the form; Rome itself did not settle the question until 1947, and then with the express provision that no judgment was being made upon the past.

As regards the Methodists in Oceania in 1872 (and one wonders what those innocent natives would have thought if they had known in what context they would be discussed in 1955!), Fr. Bévenot, S.J., has been kind enough to point out in *The Tablet* of 12 November, 1955 that I was departing from accustomed usage in describing the explicit declaration of those who baptised them (namely that "baptism had no effect upon the soul") as manifesting an explicit intention to exclude the effects which the Catholic Church believes baptism to have. He remarks that what was wrong with these missionaries was a mistake of



belief, not a misdirected intention, and I think he is strictly correct. You cannot, in the strict sense, explicitly intend to exclude an effect unless you believe that the effect would occur if you did not intend to exclude it. If this is so, then the Anglican Reformers certainly cannot be accused of a defect of intention. For nobody has ever accused them of believing that ordination normally conferred sacrificing priesthood, while explicitly intending that their own ordinations should not confer it; the accusation has always been that they did not believe that sacrificial priesthood could be conferred by any ordination whatever. They had, in fact, a mistake of belief, not a misdirected intention. Even this is largely inferential. Many of the Reformers were prepared to admit sacrificial priesthood, if only it was carefully defined; and the need for such definition is clear when one considers some of the views about priesthood and sacrifice which were current at the end of the Middle Ages. We have had to wait for the present century for writers like de la Taille, Vonier and Masure to do something to restore the balance. Practically all that Fr. Stephenson has to say about Oceania I gladly accept. As he says, "only on the extremely improbable supposition that the frame of mind of the Methodists in question was such that if they had somehow learnt the truth about the sacrament, they would have refused to proceed, would the baptisms have been invalid." I submit that we must also say that, only if the frame of mind of the Anglican Reformers was such that if they had somehow learnt the truth about sacrificial priesthood (assuming that they did not know it already) they would have refused to proceed, would their ordinations have been invalid—invalid through lack of intention, that is; defect of rite is another matter, which we must go on to consider. The only point about intention that remains obscure is what precisely was the defect of intention which, even if it was secondary to defect of form, Pope Leo XIII claimed to have discovered in Anglican orders; Fr. St. John had quite a clear view about this, but all that Fr. Stephenson tells us is that Pope Leo's "secondary charge of defect of intention was an inference from the Reformers' change of the rite."

To pass, then, from Oceania to Identifiability, and Fr. Stephenson's charge of defect of rite. In the case of the Methodist baptisms, he rightly observes, there was no abandonment of the traditional and dominical form, while in the case of the Anglican ordinations

there was substituted for the old rite a new one which, in his opinion, "was certainly invalid, because it was a departure from the accepted and long-established Catholic form in most significant circumstances, and the heretical beliefs of the Reformers (unlike those of the Methodist ministers) found expression in a new rite." In view of the fact that nobody knows who, with the probable exception of Cranmer, the compilers of the Anglican ordinal were, this statement seems rather sweeping. I should prefer to emphasise the words of Pope Pius XII in his Apostolic Constitution of 30 November, 1947, where he says, with reference to the *porrectio instrumentorum*, "If the will and precept of the Church have, for a time, made it necessary to the very validity of ordinations, yet it is still known to all that the Church can change and abrogate what she has established";<sup>1</sup> though I should want to add that the question must not be begged by assuming that the Church, in this context, must mean the Roman See. What is equally to the point is that Fr. Stephenson seems to have fallen into a confusion in his use of the words "rite" and "form." Referring to "forms departing from the Church's form" (itself a question-begging phrase if applied to the Anglican ordinals), he writes: "If the rite as a whole (that is, matter and form together) signifies the grace of the sacrament, it is valid." Now the matter and form of the priesthood, as defined by the Pope in 1947, certainly make no reference to "the grace of the sacrament," namely the power to offer sacrifice and the like; there is merely a general reference to "the dignity of the priesthood" and "the second hierarchical degree"; so if Fr. Stephenson really means by "rite" simply form and matter he cannot claim the support of the Pope. Elsewhere, however, he sees validity as determined by something very much more than mere form and matter, as is shown by his assertion that a particular form (namely the Anglican form of 1662) might be valid or invalid according to the circumstances of its use.

Now it is obvious that words mean nothing if they are deprived of all context; I agree with Fr. Stephenson here. And I agree that we must consider the "rite as a whole" in deciding validity, if only for the reason that nobody is still quite sure just what, in Roman ordinations performed before 1947, the form and matter of orders were, and because, as I have just remarked, it seems

<sup>1</sup> Trans. C. Journet, *The Church of the Word Incarnate*, I, p. 118.



difficult to identify rite simply with form and matter. I suppose we must take "the rite as a whole" as meaning the complete ordination service, in its context in the life of the Church. But what precisely are we to understand by "signifying the grace of the sacrament"? Does this require an explicit statement of the whole theology of the sacrament? Clearly not, for that would be physically impossible. Does it require, then, a statement of the essence of the character bestowed by the sacrament, and if so how comprehensive and how explicit must such a statement be? This is a matter about which theologians may well differ, and indeed do differ in the Roman Church. Is it, for example, impossible to know whether a rite which "departs from the Church's form" confers the episcopal character until Roman Catholic theologians are agreed whether the order of the episcopate is essentially different from that of the presbyterate or not? This hardly seems likely. Again, in the case of ordination to the presbyterate, can it really be necessary for validity that the rite should explicitly refer to the power to offer sacrifice, at a time when that power had not been clearly defined and was often understood in an erroneous and superstitious way? (I have in mind for example the "insane" opinion for which Melchior Cano rebukes the future Cardinal-designate Ambrosius Catharinus that "sins committed before baptism are remitted through the Sacrifice of the Cross, but all post-baptismal sins through the Sacrifice of the Altar.") I do not think I am setting up such an "external and mechanical criterion" as Fr. Stephenson suggests when I assert that what is necessary for a valid rite is that it shall be possible to identify what is being done but that it is not necessary for the rite to give a theological statement of its effect. Any other criterion will lead to endless questions as to whether the theological statement is adequate to "signify the grace of the sacrament" according to the theological fashions of the day. And it is important to recognise that there *are* theological fashions, even in the Roman Church, as we see, for example, if we compare the Eucharistic theology of Catharinus, Cano, de Lugo, de la Taille and Masure. This fact raises extremely difficult questions for theologians of any communion about the relation between the unchanging content of the revelation committed by Christ to the Church and the varying modes in which the Church in its practical exposition and its theological formulation expresses that content

at different times. I have no easy answer to this problem, which seems to me to be one of the basic outstanding problems of theology, but my complaint against Fr. Stephenson is that he hardly seems to recognise its existence. He does, however, touch upon the main point with which we are concerned here when he remarks, that, in the case of the authorised rite of the Catholic Church, no question about the adequacy of the form arises; everybody can identify the act which is being performed and no questions need be asked. That is why nobody ought to make embarrassing enquiries as to how the form of ordination in the Roman pontifical (as that form was defined in 1947) "signifies the grace of the sacrament." The same is true when the form is dominically instituted, as in baptism. It is, in fact, not at all easy in this last case to see that the form does "signify" the grace that the Church believes it to bestow, namely the abolition of the guilt of original and actual sin, regeneration and incorporation into Christ; were that so, the Methodists in Oceania could hardly have used it believing as they did.

Here, however, I must rebut Fr. Stephenson's accusation that in laying down identifiability as a criterion of validity I have fallen into the fallacy of arguing in a circle; this is where we hunt the Hobbit. According to Fr. Stephenson, when asked how to distinguish between valid and invalid rites, how to recognise a true ordination rite, I answer in effect: "It is recognised by its recognisability; an ordination rite is identified by its identifiability as an ordination rite." I neither said nor implied anything of the sort. What I said was that a valid ordination rite could be recognised by its declared purpose of conferring one of the three orders of the historic ministry. If, on the other hand, a rite declared its purpose to be the conferring of a new kind of ministry which had never before existed in the Church, it would be identifiable as an ordination rite and as an invalid one. Nevertheless, I think there is a point at issue between us, and that it is a very important point indeed. When the preface to the Anglican ordinal declared that its purpose was the continuation of the threefold ministry which had existed "from the Apostles' time," it was pointing to a concrete recognisable entity, and there were very solid reasons for doing this. In the first place, at a time when the essential nature of the priestly character was still not conclusively defined and when many of the concepts of sacrificial priesthood which

were prevalent were such as Roman Catholic theologians themselves would later come to agree in rejecting as erroneous and superstitious, there was a lot to be said for avoiding theoretical statements which might well turn out to need revision and for pointing instead to the concrete reality which it was intended to perpetuate. Secondly, while not in the least denying that ordination confers an objective character (as the Anglican Archbishops themselves insisted in their reply to Pope Leo XIII), I would maintain that the *primary* effect of ordination to the priesthood is not the investing of an individual with priesthood as a *quality* but his incorporation into the Priesthood as an *organic entity*. To overlook this is to treat priesthood as a logical universal rather than as a flesh-and-blood reality in the world of space and time, to make concessions to the individualistic outlook which has marred so much medieval and post-medieval theology, and to detach the individual priest with his priestly character from the Church as a concrete and organic whole; its natural culmination is the recent massive work of Mgr. Journet, who bases his ecclesiology not upon the doctrine of the Church as the Body of Christ but upon the hierarchy as (in the Aristotelian sense) the Church's efficient cause. Priesthood, I would affirm, is not simply or primarily a logical universal particularised in a number of individuals, but a concrete reality in the order of history, rooted in Christ the ascended High Priest and persisting in the world until the end of time as we know it. To the question "What does ordination effect?" the fundamental answer is given not in terms of an abstract statement (however accurate such a statement might be) but of the ministry as a historic organ of the historic Church; not in fact by talking about priesthood but by pointing to priests. There is nothing circular in this; in terms of Fr. Stephenson's parable, it is not like defining a Hobbit as a being which has Hobbit-like markings, but like defining it by telling you where it is and inviting you to go and look at it. Fr. Stephenson has characterised my criterion as external and mechanical; I might characterise his as abstract and individualistic.

I suspect, however, that at this point Fr. Stephenson and I differ on a fundamental issue, which it is difficult to settle by argument. To demand that a rite shall "signify the grace of the sacrament," in the sense in which Fr. Stephenson understands that phrase (I do not deny that it has another sense which is fully

acceptable), seems to me to involve an acceptance of late medieval and Tridentine theology as normative and indeed irreformable which I cannot make. The Church of England declares its intent that the orders of bishops, priests and deacons which have been in the Church "from the Apostles' time" shall be "continued and reverently used and esteemed." The Church of South India declares that it "accepts and will maintain the historic episcopate" and that "continuity with the historic episcopate will be effectively maintained." Both of them go into a good deal of detail about what bishops, presbyters and deacons are and do. I believe that the Church of South India is in many ways a gravely defective body, and Fr. Stephenson believes the same about the Church of England. But I do not see how on any sound principle the validity of the orders of either can be denied. I regret most profoundly—as anyone must who has the unity of Christendom at heart—that Roman Catholic theologians cannot admit the validity of Anglican orders, but my loyalty to the Church of England is strengthened by the fact that they are not altogether agreed as to why they reject it.

## IN FULL CRY

### *A Rejoinder to Dr. Mascall*

By

A. A. STEPHENSON

**D**R. MASCALL'S ZEST and skill undoubtedly add to the excitement and heighten the sporting interest of the chase. He would, indeed, be a formidable antagonist if only he had a better case. A poor case, however, is often better served by a bad advocate; clearmindedness generally serves, directly or indirectly, the cause of truth. I venture, in fact, to suggest that a re-reading of my December article shows it to be not even dented by Dr. Mascall's reply. He has largely, indeed, evacuated the main Anglican positions, recognising their indefensibility, and fallen back upon a novel, and still more

untenable, line of defence. For he has virtually (in spite of some half-hearted gestures) abandoned the Anglo-Catholic attempt to show that the 1552 Ordinal somehow signified the priest's essential, supernatural powers, and now defends the astonishing position that the grace of the sacrament need *neither* be signified in the rite *nor* consciously intended (not that the latter would alone suffice). This is the principal point, on which the reader should keep his eye throughout.

But first Dr. Mascall complains that the case against Anglican orders is presented somewhat differently by different people, and, in particular, that I have emphasised the argument from defective intention less than some theologians. This complaint provides the occasion for four comments, some of which lead to the heart of the matter. First, it is the case against Anglican orders as it has been presented in *THE MONTH* of July, August, September and, particularly, December 1955 that Dr. Mascall has accepted an invitation to answer, and he will himself, as a philosopher, be the first to acknowledge that if one argument proves a thesis, that thesis must be true; the support of the thesis by other less satisfactory arguments would be logically irrelevant to the certainty of its truth. Secondly, I had a very good reason for choosing not formally to expound Leo's *Apostolicae curae* (the authority of which, in any case, Anglicans deny), but to argue directly from the principles of traditional Catholic sacramental theology; for such prominent Anglican controversialists as C. F. Hrauda and Victor Roberts have in the past asserted that Leo's Apostolic Letter implicitly contradicts Catholic theological principles, according to which, they averred, Anglican orders are valid. Moreover, this procedure of mine has in fact, in its general line and emphasis, coincided with that of *Ap. curae*, thus showing incidentally that Hrauda and Roberts were as mistaken in their premisses as in their conclusion. There can be no possible doubt that it was the rite or form of the Ordinal—its meaning, character and spirit—rather than subjective intention (of the minister) that Leo emphasised. Dr. Mascall's quotation from the Bull is very far from invalidating this assertion.

Thirdly, the upshot of Dr. Mascall's reproach that I have not made enough of defect of intention would appear to be that, if he were right, there would be a second major and independent defect in the Edwardian Ordinal. But, fourthly, it may be that



Dr. Mascall's point is this: that the validity of Anglican orders must be determined, not by pure reason, but in the light both of the general nature of sacraments and of traditional sacramental doctrine. Now this is true, and Dr. Mascall's discontent may arise from the thought that in consequence my argument, while valid if it represents traditional sacramental doctrine, is rendered suspect by the (alleged) fact that some theologians lay greater emphasis on (minister's) intention. This objection might have weight if, in any point where difference of interpretation were possible, I had chosen the view less favourable to the Anglican case. But, on the contrary, I have given full value to the just contention of Anglican controversialists that Bellarmine—and, indeed, apparently the common doctrine—demands very little on the score of subjective intention. If requirements on this head are in fact more stringent, then the case against Anglican orders is proportionately strengthened.

It is perhaps desirable at this point to recapitulate Bellarmine's doctrine of intention, especially as it was cited by the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda in 1877 in connection with the Oceania decision. St. Robert,<sup>1</sup> referring to the doctrine of Florence and Trent that the intention required in the minister is that of "doing what the Church does," says that the words "what the Church does" refer not to the *effect*, the grace produced by the sacrament, but to the *rite*: the minister need not consciously intend to regenerate, to bestow the Holy Ghost, etc., but he must intend to pour the water, to anoint, etc., *as a Christian rite*—to baptise the baby, not just bath it. This view is a natural explanation of the doctrine that heretics can perform valid sacraments if they adhere to the Catholic rite. And it is a consequence of this view that if the rite is properly performed it is extremely difficult to prove defect of intention in the minister (cf. the Oceania case and *Ap. curae*, 33).

Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to suppose that a difference of emphasis on intention argues any radical disagreement among theologians, or to regard form, or rite, and intention as altogether contrasted and separate. For the reason why the effect of the sacrament need not be consciously intended by the minister is precisely because it is expressed by the rite. Indeed, the *intention* expressed by the rite, just as, to take a legal analogy, a will both

<sup>1</sup> *De Sac. in genere*, I 27.

has a meaning and expresses an intention, and legal disputation about the meaning of the will is at the same time a disputation about the intention of the testator. To stress rite or form, therefore, is inevitably to stress this "objective" intention, and this point I made perfectly plain from the beginning.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, even if his opinion about the effect is erroneous, the *minister* who retains the Church's rite somehow intends the effect, in so far as he intends the rite which in fact signifies the effect. When these considerations are given due weight, it will be seen that any difference of emphasis in serious Catholic presentations of the case are almost entirely formal and more apparent than real.<sup>2</sup>

In his discussion of intention (apparently subjective intention) Dr. Mascall formulates the question imperfectly when he asks simply whether the Reformers can be accused of explicitly intending to exclude the true effects of ordination. The intention required in the *minister* is that he shall intend the rite as such, intend, that is, to perform the prescribed ceremony *as* a sacrament or Christian rite; if the minister does not even perform the Church's rite, he can hardly intend it (to attempt to baptise by sprinkling with rose petals would appear to be defective in

<sup>1</sup> THE MONTH, July 1955, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> I freely admit that one cannot always be certain in which precise sense Leo was using the word "intention," and that interpretations of the sentence quoted by Dr. Mascall other than that which I gave in December may be possible. But there can be no two views about where Leo put the emphasis. In December I suggested that the sentence, "Cum hoc igitur . . ." (cf. p. 355), implied that defect of subjective intention was a corollary of defect of form. It is obvious from the context that the alternative interpretation (supposing Leo to have used "intention" in a specific technical sense) is this: "Inseparably connected, or interwoven, with this defect of form is a defect of intention"; the defect of intention is then, certainly, ranked together with the defect of form, but also "intention" must mean objective intention, which is only another aspect of the meaning of the form. It is, I venture to suggest, alternatively possible that Leo sometimes used "intention" in a general rather than technical sense. For in the case before him, where heretics change the rite, the technical distinctions lose much of their importance; for the presumption is that the composers of the new form will succeed in expressing their intention in the rite, and the two questions that can be asked about the intention of the minister become hardly necessary; for they both normally presuppose that the minister has performed the Church's rite; see text, below. It is perfectly clear, however, independently of these minutiae of interpretation, where the emphasis of the Bull falls—on the form, its character, spirit, or (objective) "intention." Similarly, while I have been unable to read the *Theology* controversy, I have just had the happiness of meeting personally Fr. Henry St. John, O.P., and, as expected, I learn from him that there is no significant difference between my view and his form-intention view in *Theology*.

intention as well as in form), although he may intend to do what he thinks the Church does or ought to do. It may be asked, secondly, about the minister whether he obstinately intended to exclude the *effects* of the sacrament; but in the source passages where the theologians discuss this question, it appears always to be assumed that the proper rite has been kept; the question then is whether the wrong intention prevails over the right intention implicit in the serious performance of the rite. But if the rite has been substantially changed, the question has not much importance. If it must be asked, the comment most relevant to the real point at issue is that the Reformers did effectively exclude the effects of the sacrament by a deliberate change of rite, composing a new rite which no longer signified the priest's real powers.

This is a convenient point at which to rebut Dr. Mascall's assertion that the charge against the 1552 Ordinal is simply its novelty. The point is, of course, that it was new in the sense of being revolutionary and utterly different; under the influence of the new theology, which rejected the Mass and the Real Presence, it rejected (as Leo pointed out) all the ceremonies and formulas which clearly expressed the true powers of the Catholic priest and removed even from the prayers which it retained every reference to, and trace of, the priest's essential powers of consecrating and sacrificing. It is Dr. Mascall, again, who is inaccurate when, observing that, "with the probable exception of Cranmer . . . nobody knows who the compilers" of the Ordinal were, he stigmatises as "rather sweeping" my statement that "the heretical beliefs of the Reformers found expression in a new rite." Clearly my statement does not even raise the question who were the actual compilers of the Ordinal. Similarly, the charge that I "confused" form and rite is a little captious. It is, of course, common doctrine that the sacramental signification, while often diffused over the whole rite, is concentrated in the essential part, the "matter and form." But, as Dr. Mascall agrees, context may be important in determining the meaning of the central part, or form, and while "context" may include historical context and a Church's official teaching, the most important context is the immediate context, that is, the rite as a whole. All this being taken for granted, it is sometimes convenient to speak of "rite, or form."



## II

Although there is no real estrangement between form and (even subjective) intention, it remains vitally important to distinguish between the two, between the intention of the minister and the meaning of the rite. The reason is this: subjective intention may be "blind," in the sense that the minister need not know or explicitly intend the effect of the sacrament; he need only perform the rite for what it is worth, implicitly intending the effect, "whatever it may be," attached to it by Christ. But the rite, particularly the form, may not be blind; it must definitely signify the true effect, the invisible grace proper to the sacrament.

Now, Dr. Mascall denies this time-honoured axiom that the rite must signify the effect of the sacrament. This denial is the measure of the extreme weakness of his position. Here, too, perhaps, we have the explanation of his desire to soft-pedal the distinction between intention and form; for if the gulf between their respective requirements could be bridged, Dr. Mascall's contention would seem less revolutionary. Let us examine the arguments adduced in support of this surprising contention. Dr. Mascall argues, first, that the fact that the Oceania Methodists could baptise without believing in the supernatural effect of the sacrament is evidence that in baptism the rite does not symbolise its effect. But in December I showed in some detail how the baptismal rite does plainly symbolise or signify the effects of the sacrament. The Methodists really prove the rule in so far as they commonly believe that, though baptism does not actually regenerate, it symbolises a regeneration that has already taken place. It is not, that is, the symbolic character of the baptismal rite that the Methodists are blind to, but its efficaciousness. Secondly, Dr. Mascall is quite mistaken in saying that the matter and form of the priesthood as defined in 1947 "certainly make no reference to 'the grace of the sacrament.'" In a Catholic context the very word "priest" suffices to signify the sacrificial power; moreover the immediate context, the whole rite, whose importance Dr. Mascall recognises, expresses most vividly (*e.g.*, in the handing of the chalice and paten and the anointing of the hands, not to speak of the words, which are still more explicit) the priest's essential powers and functions. The reason why there was controversy between Catholics about which parts of the ceremony were the "matter and form" was

that in the course of centuries a duplication of the essentials had occurred owing to an early amalgamation of different rites, so that the essentials of the priesthood are clearly signified in *several* parts of the developed Latin rite.

The question at issue is whether sacramental rites in general (the application of the principle to matrimony is rather obscure, but love is mysterious) signify—really though symbolically express—their grace, or whether they are purely arbitrary signs, in the minimal sense of marks, like a stone marking the place of a buried treasure. It must be remembered that there *is* a conventional element, particularly in the symbolism of the “matter”; water, for instance, could symbolise several things besides cleansing; but the accompanying *words*, the form, generally make the symbolism unambiguous and explicit. Anyone can decide for himself the truth of the matter by examining the rites of the various sacraments. Leo was justified in saying that “everyone knows” that sacraments “should signify the grace which they cause.” The doctrine, indeed, is implied by ordinary language when we speak of “a sacramental view of nature,” meaning that nature really shows forth invisible realities. Dr. Mascall’s assertion that the doctrine is of late medieval and Tridentine origin is surely rather sweeping (if he will allow this retort, not, in intention, discourteous). The doctrine goes back to the golden age of theology and is frequently asserted or assumed by St. Thomas. St. Thomas begins by defining sacraments as signs, and he means by a sign something like a picture, something which signifies or “means” as words do, only less clearly. He explains that the reason *why* a substantial change in the form invalidates a sacrament is because the words produce their effect *quantum ad sensum quem faciunt*. He is clear that the baptismal washing really symbolises the cleansing of the soul by the infusion of sanctifying grace, and even quotes Scripture for it (*abluti estis, sanctificati estis*). He even has the doctrine that the matter and form make up the sign, the form making the meaning more precise.

As a generalisation, of course, the doctrine cannot go back beyond the twelfth century, since the seven sacraments were only classified under one category by Peter Lombard. But in reference to particular sacraments the doctrine is found in the Fathers. It would be a mistake to think that St. Thomas drew

his theology entirely from Aristotle. St. Augustine defines a sacrament as *visibile verbum* and says that the water in baptism "touches the body, but cleanses the heart."

No, of course the rite need not give an exhaustive statement of the theology of the sacrament. The puzzles Dr. Mascall invents are artificial. I showed in December that this Catholic doctrine, traditional since St. Thomas, best solves problems about validity of form (some border-line cases there must be) and that Dr. Mascall's novel criterion is useless. I dealt last August with the unfounded assertion that any medieval school of any importance held that "*Accipe Spiritum Sanctum . . .*" alone was the form in ordination. Dr. Mascall's problem about the episcopate was anticipated and answered by Leo XIII (C. T. S., ch. 29).

I welcome Dr. Mascall's distinction between "the unchanging content of revelation" and the varying modes of its theological formulation (though in the Catholic Church "theological fashions" are not so revolutionary as elsewhere). The distinction provides the answer to the untenable view that at the Reformation the theology of the Mass was so confused that it was impossible or undesirable either to affirm or deny the sacrificial character of the Eucharist. Questions, indeed, about the precise relation between the Mass, Calvary and the Last Supper are among the harder questions of theology, and some medieval theories were unsatisfactory. No doubt many people could not have explained lucidly just *how* the Mass was a sacrifice; but *that* the Mass was a sacrifice, in some sense Calvary re-presented, was a point of faith which it was heresy to deny. It is really absurd to suggest that there was not a straightforward conflict between English Catholics and Reformers on the central dogma; moreover, there was no suggestion of unsatisfactory theology or superstition in the ordination rite which the Reformers rejected. It was a straight question of whether a priest is or is not ordained "to consecrate and offer" the Body of Christ. And does Dr. Mascall seriously expect us to believe that the Catholic laymen who harboured priests when the penalty was death did not sufficiently know what the Mass was?

### III

Briefly to hunt the Hobbit: I can only repeat that since, in this context, a criterion is that by which a thing is recognised

or identified, identifiability cannot be a criterion, for that would mean that a thing was identified, and identifiable, by its identifiability. The criterion of identity, is, of course, a thing's distinguishing characteristics. Dr. Mascall's apparent adherence to his strange criterion seems to be a part of his puzzling campaign to set up an antithesis between essences and existents, qualities and the real or concrete: to suggest that existents or "organic entities" are characterless and indescribable. But qualities are as real, exist as truly, as "concrete entities." Every existent (including organisms) is characterised and consequently describable. Yet Dr. Mascall says that he cannot define the priesthood; he can only tell us where it is, or point to priests. This is very mysterious. And how can he point at it, or know where it is, unless he knows what it "looks like"? It is obvious that Dr. Mascall's *real* criterion is, after all, a set of characters. "The historic ministry," indeed, is a blanket description of the ministry; it is, however, in Dr. Mascall's use of it, an essentially defective description. It covers some external features of the ministry: the ministry must be threefold; the presbyter must have the prerogative of celebrating the Lord's Supper and the bishop that of ordaining. But the criterion omits the essential characters, the priest's supernatural powers of transubstantiating, etc.—powers without which ordination and the Eucharist lose their meaning.

But even supposing that the candidate succeeded in locating and identifying a bishop without knowing what a bishop was, Dr. Mascall's actual theory of ordination presents a number of grave difficulties. The essential priestly powers, he holds, need *neither* be signified in the rite *nor* consciously intended. All this is surely very odd—and novel. It appears to be Dr. Mascall himself who finds himself "in the uncomfortable position of having to improvise special theories." All that is required, on this view, is some form or gesture of election or incorporation into the "organic entity"—a mere invitation to accept membership would do, or the declared purpose of "conferring one of the three, etc." Again, if the inner meaning of the order conferred is irrelevant to validity, why would not the form "I make you an elder" or "overseer" serve as well as "I make you a priest (presbyter)" or "bishop"? The former pair of words are possible, indeed literal, translations of the original Greek words, and, moreover, represent the Episcopalian Methodist conception of

the ministry. It is only their *meaning* (which Dr. Mascall scorns) that distinguishes them from "priest" and "bishop." Again, why, on this theory, could one not confirm validly by simply declaring one's purpose to confer the historic sacrament of confirmation, and that even though one had no idea what the true grace of the sacrament was? Again, when Dr. Mascall says that the primary effect of ordination is not the investing with the priestly character or quality, but incorporation, by "primary" does he mean logically prior or more important? If the former, then a man would be a priest logically prior to having the priestly character or quality; if the second, what is greater than the priestly character, which I suppose to be participation in Christ's eternal Priesthood? Again, while it is easy to see how the character is indelible if it is conferred immediately by the sacrament, if, on the other hand, it results from membership of an organism (presumably *qua* sacred) it is not clear why it would not be lost by sin, or at least by expulsion or excommunication. And I must here repel the charge that the ordinary Catholic view (that the rite signifies the effect and confers the character directly) is "individualistic" (and it is particularly hard to be accused of being abstract and individualistic at the same time!). Characters or qualities are the very basis of the community of things; it is in their qualities that individual existents may resemble one another. Emphasis, therefore, on the priestly character so far from encouraging an individualistic view, provides a more intelligible basis than Dr. Mascall's theory for the priestly fellowship. Finally, the most obvious objection to this original and ingenious but unsound defence is that, while on the traditional view neither heresy nor schism need in itself invalidate orders, on Dr. Mascall's view of ordination as incorporation into an organic entity (collegiate existent? concrete universal?) anything like schism must be fatal. Entry into a corporation must depend on the *will* of the corporation. Irregular admission or initiation by a few dissidents will be worthless. On this view, therefore, uncanonical or illegitimate orders must be null, as they were often regarded in the early Greek Church. The juridical aspect becomes much more important and a merely material Apostolic succession such as the Anglican, will not be enough.

Dr. Mascall, I think, ceases to be dispassionate when he studies the theology of the late middle ages and the sixteenth century

(though ecclesiastical morals and discipline were corrupt enough). I long for the unity of Christendom as deeply as he does; but I see no way to it save by undoing the ill done, by unweaving the ill-woven web back to the point of tragic disaster.

## ORIGIN OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM

By

R. E. INGRAM

**M**ANY THEORIES have been proposed to explain the origin of our solar system from a previous state. They follow two main lines of thought. In "Collision Theory" there is an encounter of the sun with another body, whereas in "Nebular Theory" there is a gradual evolution of sun and planets from a single nebula, or cloud. The first Collision Theory was proposed in 1749 by Buffon, a French naturalist. It was immediately followed by the first Nebular Theory, whose author was the famous German philosopher, Immanuel Kant, then a university lecturer on mathematics and physics; independently, and somewhat later, Laplace developed this idea and it is now usually known as "Laplace's Nebular Hypothesis."

Buffon suggested that the sun was hit by a comet, a very large one it must have been, and that fragments were knocked off and scattered. The fragments became the planets, our Earth one of them. The comet of this theory later became a star and the collision a "near miss," so that the star passed close by the sun which was in a primitive condition of extended size. The planets were thought to have been drawn out of the sun by gravitational forces, the same forces that pull the sea towards the sun or moon and cause our tides. This was "Tidal Origin." Still later developments envisaged the sun as one member of a double star system—two stars that move around each other—whose companion was



involved in the collision process. But in all these theories it must be admitted that a meeting between two stars is a very unlikely event. Stars are pin points compared to the enormous distances that separate them and in their wanderings through space it is almost impossible for two to meet. On the other hand double stars are common in the universe. With this in mind Mr. Hoyle proposed in 1945 that the sun had a companion at a very early stage and that this companion was a nova, or supernova, one of those stars that suddenly blaze up and explode into dust. He supposed that "the Sun's companion exploded with enormous violence, the catastrophic disintegration causing the remains to be flung away from the sun, save for a small wisp of material that the Sun managed to hang on to. This wisp of material then spread out around the Sun as a disc and in this disc condensations occurred that eventually grew into planets."<sup>1</sup>

In his latest work, *Frontiers of Astronomy*, Mr. Hoyle turns to the Nebular Theory, that both sun and planets were formed from the same cloud of interstellar gas and dust, the remnants of an exploded supernova.

The suggestion that the material of the Earth was indeed derived from an exploding star—a supernova—is supported by strong evidence. But it now seems less likely that the supernova was a companion of the Sun. Rather does it seem that the Sun was born in a whole shower of stars and that the supernova, or supernovae, belonged to that shower.

Although this view may not seem much different from the old it turns out that the changes of argument are far greater than might be thought at first sight. The shower of stars must have been surrounded by a cloud of gas—the cloud from which the stars had just condensed. A supernova undergoing violent disintegration must have expelled gases that went to join the cloud, the material from the supernova getting mixed with the large quantity of hydrogen of which the cloud was mainly composed. Our problem is then to explain how the Sun and planets were formed out of this mixture of materials. In particular we have to explain how the materials of the Earth, derived from the supernova, were separated out again after they had thus become mixed with a great deal of hydrogen.

We are familiar with the manner in which moisture forms into water droplets in a humid atmosphere and lodges on some cold surface like a window pane. This process is one of condensation, a

<sup>1</sup> *Frontiers of Astronomy*, by Fred Hoyle (Heinemann 25s).

change from moist air to water droplets. It is the present belief of astronomers that the same process is at work in the vast regions of space. In particular regions gas and dust tend to gather and then condense into stars. In this way stars are born. It may be that there is now a record of this process at work. At the recent International Astronomical Union in Dublin two photographs were shown of a small region of the Orion Nebula. One was taken ten years ago and the other very recently. The older photograph showed three stars in a cloud of gas and the recent photograph showed five. Taking account of the fact that the light from this region took 1,600 years to reach the earth, it would seem that we have a picture of the first appearance of two stars as they emerged from the surrounding dust in the middle of the fourth century.

If the sun came from a cloud of gas and dust in this manner of condensing did the planets come from the same cloud? Laplace affirmed that they did and described a rotating cloud which, by its spin and cooling process, shed rings from its equator. These rings condensed into planets and the sun was left spinning in the centre surrounded by the planets moving in their orbits. It is a most attractive theory. Automatically it accounts for many uniformities in our solar system, the planets all revolve around the sun in the same direction, they lie on the same plane, rotate in the same manner (with the exception of Uranus which admits an explanation) and have similar orbits which are nearly circular though varying greatly in size.

However there are serious difficulties against this theory of origin. They come from the principle of the conservation of angular momentum which means that the total amount of rotation should always remain the same. If the rotations of the planets and the sun be measured and added the total should equal the amount of rotation that the original cloud possessed. But this amount of rotation in the cloud would not be sufficient for the cloud to throw off rings, it would merely cause it to flatten at its poles. From another point of view we might say that if the planets were formed from rings that spread out from the sun, then the sun should now be rotating very quickly. Actually the sun takes twenty-six days to rotate once, which is very slow indeed.

Some attempts have been made in recent years to overcome these difficulties. Von Weizsacker in 1944 assumed that turbulence caused condensations in a large disc-shaped nebula and that such

action explained the loss of rotation in the system. Kuiper modified his theory and started with the sun as an infant star surrounded by a disc of rotating matter the size of the solar system. The disc flattened as it spun and the forces of gravity created regions of denser matter within it. In time (it may have been one hundred million years) these regions became our planets. This somewhat mixed theory (there must have been a collision of the sun with a cloud of gas before the evolution of the planets from that cloud) has been widely accepted and has led scientists to explain geological properties of the earth by its aid.

Mr. Hoyle has a different answer. He appeals to some external process to slow down the spin of the sun when planetary rings have been formed. He finds that such a process must occur late in the stages of development.

Stars like the Sun with surface temperatures less than  $6,000^{\circ}\text{C}$  rotate slowly like the Sun. But stars with surface temperatures greater than  $7,000^{\circ}\text{C}$  rotate considerably more rapidly . . . Now the difference between one star and another can scarcely show at all during the early stages of the shrinkage. Certainly the difference between two condensations, one yielding a surface temperature of  $6,000^{\circ}\text{C}$  and the other yielding a surface temperature of  $7,000^{\circ}\text{C}$  must be very small indeed during the early stages, much too small for the two stars to come to have markedly different rotation speeds if the external process were of main effect during the early stages. The inference is that the process operates mainly during the late stages of condensation.

In the early stages it is supposed that a rotating sphere of gas and dust flattens and grows a disc at its equator.

Once the Sun had grown a disc the external process was able to come into operation. The word "external" simply means external to the Sun and the disc was now external to the Sun. The process consisted of a steady transference of rotational momentum from the Sun to the disc. Two birds were thereby killed with one stone. The Sun was slowed down to its present slow rate of spin and the disc, containing the material out of which the planets were subsequently to condense, was pushed farther and farther from the Sun. The solar condensation probably first grew its disc when it had shrunk to a size somewhat less than the orbit of the innermost planet, Mercury. The pushing outwards of the main bulk of the material of the disc explains why the larger planets now lie so far from the Sun.

To explain why the total rotation of the sun and planets is now so small, Mr. Hoyle supposes that only a small portion of the original disc is now contained in the planets, all the rest escaped from the sun's influence.

Fortunately it seems probable that a great deal of hydrogen did indeed succeed in escaping from the disc out to the interstellar gas. Otherwise the scarcity of hydrogen in the planets Uranus and Neptune cannot be satisfactorily explained. Jupiter and Saturn seem to contain much the same amount of hydrogen as the Sun does, but the more distant Uranus and Neptune have comparatively little hydrogen. To account for this, large quantities of hydrogen must have escaped from the outermost parts of the disc of planetary material—from the outermost parts presumably because the restraining pull of the Sun was at its weakest there.

But if the restraining pull of the sun on the hydrogen at the outermost parts of the disc was so weak, it would seem that it must have been correspondingly weak on the other particles present. Why then did any of the outermost part of the disc remain? The separating force due to the rotation of the disc should seemingly have scattered all the matter as it scattered the hydrogen. If it did so, was there really enough time for planets to condense as the "main bulk" was pushed outwards? At best the whole process described would lead to "solid or liquid particles condensing out of the gas." Could these small pieces come together to form our planets? Mr. Hoyle advocates a "sticking agent"—but about such glues we know nothing. Furthermore, the earth is a complicated structure. There are layers of rock surrounding a liquid core. Some geophysicists say that the liquid core is molten iron others say that it is the rock which has become liquid as an effect of the enormous pressure in the earth's interior and that there is an inner core further down towards the centre. This inner core, it is believed, is of a different chemical constitution. If solid or liquid particles did get stuck together, then they must have been "porous" and so allow heavy liquid to move towards their centre. In such manner a liquid iron core could have been formed in the centre of the earth. But further considerations would be needed to describe the formation of an inner core.

Mr. Hoyle has attempted a great work in his *Frontiers of Astronomy*. He surveys the science and gives the theories which seem to him to explain the universe. But the claim that this is

"the new authoritative picture of the universe for our time" is unfair to all, and they may be many, who differ from his views. The "frontiers" are the limits to which scientific theory extends, they are always changing as new facts become known and new theories arise to replace those which can no longer hold. Few of those new theories reach any degree of certainty. Mr. Hoyle writes of them as one who has explored the whole territory and is familiar with the regions beyond. But where does he leave us at the end? If we trace back the history of the sun to a nebular origin, whence came that cloud from which it was formed?

We know that the distant nebulae are moving away from us, and from one another, with ever increasing speeds which indicate that they were once closely packed together. This was matter in a super-dense condition in a small region of space five thousand, some say seven thousand, million years ago. This age of the universe is in good agreement with the well-established age of the earth, four thousand million years. According to this super-dense theory, an initial explosion sent all matter moving outwards. But Mr. Hoyle thinks it was not so and that as distant matter moves away so new matter is created to fill the emptying space. The new matter comes from nowhere, from no previous state; it is continuously created and preserves the universe, more or less as it is at present, in what the theory calls "a steady state." That limited portion of the universe that can be observed appears much the same now as it was at any other stage in its history.

Which theory is correct? Neither theory need contradict the revealed truth that God created the universe in the beginning, He may have created it in a super-dense condition or in a steady state and if He created it in a steady state then He is continually renewing it by creating the new matter that arrives. Revelation is primarily concerned with the questions "Who created?" and "Why?" and leaves to science the question "How?" But science does not yet know in what state the solar system or the universe was created.

Mr. Hoyle believes that the steady state theory will lead to a full understanding of the universe and is willing to back it against all comers, "the stakes are high, and win or lose, are worth playing for." But too many "final theories" have arisen only to collapse in the life-time of their inventors. Will we ever succeed in fathoming completely the mystery of the universe?



The answer of vigorous minds who have penetrated most deeply into the secrets of the cosmos, is quite modest and reserved: we are, they think, at the very beginning; there is a long way still to go and the path will be tirelessly followed; however it is completely improbable that any investigator will ever succeed in recognising and much less in solving the mysteries locked up in the physical universe. Such mysteries therefore postulate and point to the existence of One Spirit Who is infinitely superior, the Divine Creative Spirit Who creates everything that exists, conserves it in being and governs it, and meanwhile with supreme insight knows and scrutinises His handiwork, now just as He did at the dawn of the first day of creation—"The Spirit of God moved over the waters." (Genesis I, 2)<sup>1</sup>

## REVIEWS

### ENCYCLOPÆDIC BIOGRAPHY

*Franz Xaver: sein Leben und seine Zeit*, by Georg Schurhammer, S.J. Erster Band, Europa, 1506-1541 (Herder, Freiburg im Breisgau 48 DM).

THIS MAGNIFICENT VOLUME—to call it merely a large octavo would seem like an affront—runs to 776 pages and must contain well over half a million words, about one-third of which are in the small minion 7-point type reserved by printers for footnotes and references. Sometimes there are seventeen such footnotes to the page and rarely less than seven. This is indeed the exuberance of learning and also the high-water mark of fine printing. The book does infinite credit to the great Catholic firm of Herder and Company which has risen phoenix-like from the disaster that befell it in Hitler's War and resumed thus grandly the record of 150 years. St. Francis Xavier must have cost Mr. Herder a fortune, just as St. Peter Canisius did at an earlier time, and those two will surely be waiting for him with a jewelled crown at the gates of Heaven. In this world he certainly will not profit much from *Franz Xaver*, even if all 800 copies are sold at £4 1s 7d a time. His firm is in the grand tradition of Christophe Plantin who found his reward, not in money, but in perfect craftsmanship and the diffusion of good learning. This brings us to Fr. George Schurhammer's part in the great enterprise. The book may be said to be the result of a lifetime's devotion to St. Francis Xavier. In his Preface, the Father tells that he first determined to write the life of

<sup>1</sup> Address to the International Congress of Astronomy. His Holiness Pope Pius XII, Vatican, 1952.



St. Francis on scientific lines in 1910, when he was twenty-eight. He is now seventy-three, and all the years between have been consecrated to the pursuit of Francis with tireless assiduity in no less than forty public and private archives of Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, Belgium, Germany and England (the British Museum). Of printed sources which bear in any way on the life and times of the saint, almost nothing has escaped him, which makes it the more surprising to find absent from his fifteen pages of bibliography such a classical masterpiece on his theme as Imbart de la Tour's *Les Origines de la Réforme*. One can regret too that no honour of mention is given to the charming studies on St. Francis Xavier which André Bellessort contributed to the *Revue des Deux Mondes* when he was editor of that great periodical. This one-time secretary of the French Academy knew his Japan at first hand, which has not been Fr. Schurhammer's privilege. These are about the only two omissions worthy of notice, and, my goodness, but this great scholar does make up for them in other directions.

Thus, he appears to have devoured the entire eleven volumes of the *Opus Epistolarum* of Erasmus which Dr. P. S. Allen edited at Oxford over a period of thirty-one years. Erasmus seems to have fascinated Fr. Schurhammer, as he has done so many other learned men. He devotes no less than ten pages, furnished with eighty notes and references, to the *Colloquia* alone. This is "background" with a vengeance, because the plain fact is that Erasmus scarcely impinged on the life of St. Francis Xavier at all. He never anywhere breathes the name of that Prince of Humanists, and his only discernible link with him is that he saw his newly-made grave in the Minster at Basel in 1536. As a *biography* strictly so called, *Franz Xaver* suffers in this respect. Fr. Schurhammer, with all his splendid qualities, seems to have been seduced by the encyclopædic drift, the passion for completeness, of so much fine German learning. Poor St. Francis tends to be drowned in a deluge of facts, valuable in themselves but not really relevant to his heroic story. No saint, no man however great, and Francis was very great, could stand up to such an overwhelming cloudburst of facts and footnotes as we are given here. Dickens disappeared under Foster's avalanche and Disraeli died at the hands of Money Penny. It is surely a mistake to think that bare facts are of themselves creative. They have, as it were, to be boiled down and strained before they become edible and nourishing. This all-inclusive book omits the process. Fr. Schurhammer is not a good cook, but a marvellous provider of cooking materials. It is not easy to glimpse St. Francis in the round in the book because he is built up piecemeal, a bit here and a bit there. We long for a sight of the wood but cannot get it because we are so hopelessly entangled in the trees. Those notes swarm about our ears like a hundred hives of bees. Sometimes there are three or four of them

to a single line of text. As there are to be six more volumes in addition to the present one, the whole huge and most gallant undertaking might, perhaps, have been better described as an Encyclopædia of St. Francis Xavier than as a Biography of him. No saint in the calendar has ever been more magnificently served. This great work about him and about all the fascinating characters moving on the fringes of his existence is an inexhaustible mine of learning for others to exploit to their hearts' content. The tremendous battle between the theologians and the humanists is vividly described in the six chapters devoted to Xavier's student life at Paris, and the early evolution of the Society of Jesus is brilliantly traced, with succinct but impeccably accurate sketches of the first companions of St. Ignatius. Fr. Schurhammer's account of the coming of Lutheranism and Calvinism to France is not nearly so satisfying as that provided by P. Imbart de la Tour, nor is his treatment of the University of Paris to be compared with the beautifully articulated work of the late Dr. Stéphen D'Irsay, another masterpiece absent from the bibliography of *Franz Xaver*, but he is still extraordinarily good on both extensive topics and gives much valuable information not easily accessible elsewhere. His book is not one to be read through from the first page to the last and it will certainly not do for convent refectories. But if it is sampled in sections or about particular topics it will be found immensely rewarding, even if the reader is sometimes disconcerted by a certain lack of urbanity in the teeming pages. The Father is now and then less courteous than a fine scholar ought to be in dealing with other writers who may have had the misfortune to differ from him in their conclusions. His index, which is almost perfect, makes consultation of the great book extremely easy. Altogether, this first volume is a most notable achievement and represents devotion to a purpose which can only be described as heroic.

JAMES BRODRICK

### AQUINAS AMONG THE PELICANS

*Aquinas*, by F. C. Copleston (Penguin Books 3s 6d).

**N**O BETTER CHOICE could be made than Fr. Copleston to introduce Thomism to an audience most of whom either dismiss him as a bogus philosopher because he was first and foremost a Christian theologian or assume that any philosophy preceding the development of the sciences must be as outdated as medieval castles or armour. For it is precisely such *a priori* prejudices that Fr. Copleston refutes with his power of clear exposition and his comprehensive knowledge of Western philosophy from antiquity to the present day.

It is not his purpose to defend the Thomist positions but to explain what they are and St. Thomas's reasons for holding them and to show that modern science has neither made them irrelevant nor invalidated the reasoning by which they are supported. For as he shows in his introductory chapter, the Thomist metaphysic is based not upon the conclusions of the sciences, though St. Thomas made use of contemporary science to illustrate his arguments, but on the nature of finite being as such as it is known with certainty by all men. True, as he points out, this fact restricts very considerably the scope of philosophy. It cannot like the sciences enrich us progressively with facts newly discovered and is indeed largely the clarification and adequate statement of the metaphysics implicit in the certitudes of common sense. On the other hand, these fundamental certitudes derived from inspecting the very nature of being are the basis on which all scientific knowledge must build, and when they are denied or doubted, and metaphysics condemned, the foundation is removed on which scientific knowledge must be built. In particular Fr. Copleston exposes the fallacy of regarding as purely linguistic or grammatical what belongs to human thought as such, irrespective of vocabulary or syntax. At this point I would dispute the claim of those who reject *a priori* metaphysical knowledge, for example, the fact of universal causation, to be called empiricists. On the contrary, the true empiricist is the thinker prepared to accept in every form the human experience to which these metaphysical apprehensions undoubtedly belong and who does not *a priori* restrict experience to the particular type of experience the critic approves.

Having cleared the ground and, we hope, won for St. Thomas a respectful hearing, Fr. Copleston explains the fundamental principles of Thomism, *e.g.*, form and matter, act and potency, substance and accident, essence and existence. He agrees with Gilson that, while employing the philosophy of Aristotle, St. Thomas, unlike Aristotle who was concerned primarily with the nature, the essence of things, is primarily concerned with their existence. And this concern with the existence of finite things, because their existence is contingent leads him to the Absolute Existence of God. There is an excellent explanation of the famous five proofs of God's existence showing that they have not been refuted by Kant or any other critic but have been and are grossly misunderstood. In particular, the argument of a first unchanging cause of change has been widely taken, even by Bertrand Russell, to deny the possibility of an infinite series, though St. Thomas held in fact that creation *ab aeterno* could not be philosophically disproved.

Fr. Copleston explains that substance is not "an unknowable substratum hidden away under" its accidents but "an individual centre of characteristic activity." I was pleased to find this dynamic explanation

of substance and accident. It harmonises well with my personal conviction that existents are energies. But would Aquinas have adopted so dynamic a standpoint?

In regard to form, I cannot but think that St. Thomas took over from Aristotle an unavowed shift of meaning as between inorganic objects and living organisms. In the former it is the external form, *e.g.*, the form of Hercules imposed on a block of marble, its matter, in the latter the life principle which makes the organism what it is. Would it not be better to call the latter not form but formative principle—for brevity one might perhaps call it the formation—the form being the nature produced by its operation?

Where I find Thomism least satisfactory is its doctrine of soul and body, so well expounded here. If the soul is, as St. Thomas teaches, simply the form (formative principle) of the body, individual survival of death seems to be impossible. Nor in fact, as Fr. Copleston shows, did Aristotle teach it. St. Thomas's "separable form" (capable of existing by itself) seems to me a meaningless, because self-contradictory, conception. Nor does this Aristotelian psychology do justice to the experience of the mystics. This is not, of course, to deny that the soul is the formative principle of the body, but to maintain that if it is to survive bodily death, it must also be a spirit, a substance in its own right, transcending and therefore surviving its inferior function as the soul of a mortal body. I also find it difficult to believe that the intellectual difference between St. Thomas and the village idiot is due solely to their physiological organisation and ceases at death.

A chapter is devoted to St. Thomas's teaching on morality and society. It includes a convincing defence of a rational ethic—though the fact of moral intuition is not denied—and of a moral law unchangeable inasmuch as it is founded on the permanent nature of man and his environment. But there is, of course, also a relative, even subjective, factor in actual codes, for example, when St. Thomas defends the capital punishment of heretics. On one point I cannot altogether agree with Fr. Copleston's explanation. He explains St. Thomas's statement that secondary precepts of the natural moral law can in a few cases be changed for special reasons by the example that the obligation to return property entrusted to us does not bind us to return his knife to a homicidal maniac. Is there in fact a precept of the moral law binding us to return property indiscriminately? Surely St. Thomas has in mind primarily the Divine permission of polygamy under the Old Law or of Abraham's marriage to his half-sister.

In his concluding chapter Fr. Copleston speaks of the need to develop Thomism if it is to deal with more recent problems. Can it be simply development or must it not involve substantial modifications of St. Thomas's thought? It is sufficient, for example, to consult a modern

Flora to discover that the Aristotelian canonisation of the species as that whose members possess the same form and are differentiated solely by their matter is untenable. No sharp distinction can be drawn between species and variety. Fr. Copleston apparently considers Thomism the perennial philosophy. I regard it rather as but one expression of a wider philosophy truly perennial because based on acceptance of the whole of human experience and the fundamental certainties visible by inspection of being, the Platonic-Aristotelian-Neoplatonist tradition. There can however be no better approach to this philosophy than the study, though critical, of its greatest exponent up to the present day. This book should open up that approach to many hitherto debarred from it by ignorance, prejudice or misconception.

E. I. WATKIN

### LATER ENGLISH MONASTICISM

*The Religious Orders in England, Vol. II: The End of the Middle Ages*, by Dom David Knowles (Cambridge University Press 45s).

THE RECENT PUBLICATION of Professor David Knowles's second volume of *The Religious Orders in England* brings his study of the English religious down to the end of the Middle Ages. Preceded by its first volume in 1948, and *The Monastic Order in England* in 1940 (which has since been reprinted with corrections), the three works as they stand represent a massive survey of religious life in England from Anglo-Saxon times down to the Wars of the Roses, and a promised final volume will carry it through to its dissolution under Henry VIII.

Taken as a whole, the trilogy is naturally an indispensable guide for the ecclesiastical historian, whose judgments are often liable to falter in those fields which lie outside his own particular interests. But Professor Knowles's synthesis is much more than a specialist's retreat. It is an exposition of a way of life which, although it has become obscure and almost alien to the modern world of thought, still retains its power to attract the interest of a large, serious-minded public. For it, no less than for the professional historian, these studies are of very great value indeed.

This is particularly true of Professor Knowles's latest volume. The period is fraught with peril, both for the *dilettanti* and for those writers who seem to be incapable of escaping the burden of their own prejudices and religious preferences. Restraint and the need for objective judgments are never so much needed as in the writing of the history of these autumnal years of medieval England, and the temptation to write this chapter of it backwards from the Reformation must be almost irresistible. It need hardly be said here that the author altogether shuns



this dishonesty. What he has done, rather, is to trace the significant changes which were taking place within the religious, intellectual and social framework of the nation in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as reflected in the lives of its monks and friars.

And here at the book's beginning, appears the first of a series of valuable correctives to the more popularly held generalisations on this period, which are to be one of the chief assets of the work. He does not deny that the effects of the plague on the religious communities were disastrous at the time, but armed with the latest research on the problems involved, he is able to suggest why, for example, the Black Death may not now be considered "the chief cause of the alleged economic distress of the monasteries in the later Middle Ages."

The author then plunges into the scholastic developments taking place among the religious of the fourteenth century, and discusses the vigorous controversy which resulted from them. As specialists in this period are well aware, these struggles in the world of politico-ecclesiastical thought played a considerable part in the history of England in the later Middle Ages. The protracted arguments between the friars and the *possessionati*, the soul-searching enquiries which followed FitzRalph's and Bradwardine's discussions on grace and predestination, and the violence of Wyclif's invective against men like Adam Easton and Uthred of Boldon were not merely the academic wranglings of a few keen schoolmen, neither were such clashes to be confined to the Schools. And within the space he has allotted to these controversies, Professor Knowles shows the essence of the issues at stake with enviable economy and objectivity. Of Wyclif and the effects of his teaching he says: "... medieval monasticism might well have felt a premonitory tremor throughout its frame in the years when both Wyclif and Langland were walking over its grave. With an appalling precision the fate which they foretold came upon the religious, and the programme which Wyclif had outlined was carried through to the last detail . . . He had cast his bread upon the running waters, and it returned after many days."

The chapters which bring the first part of his book to a close, record the developments taking place throughout the fifteenth century within the several monastic orders as well as those of the friars. Here one may see, perhaps for the first time, how complex were the political and social factors at work which could mark down the alien priories for dissolution, and yet give rise to a St. Martin's summer in late medieval English religious life. But something had gone out of its earlier enthusiasm. Abbot John Whethamstede was a monastic potentate, but he was no Samson. "He understood the external life of his times, but neither in mind nor in spirit did he rise above it."

Professor Knowles devotes the last part of his book to the institutional



history of the monasteries. Packed with all kinds of detailed information, from the changing methods of recruitment to the particular kinds of books which interested monks in late fifteenth-century England, it is clearly the work of a person intimately acquainted with both the sources and the life itself. To give full measure, three valuable appendices round off the whole work.

It is difficult to do justice to this beautifully written book in a short review. There is the occasional nod. St. Bridget, although of noble birth, was never Queen of Sweden as Professor Knowles states (p. 277), and she was not canonised in 1393 (pp. 57 and 277), but 7 October, 1391. Again, Adam Easton is much more likely to have incepted in 1365 than in 1363 (p. 58). Inevitably, with thinner sources available (for the English mendicants have yet to find their Pantin), his treatment of the friars is more slender than that of the monks, and this will not please everybody. But the detached and austere judgments which are scattered throughout this book, simple as they are to read, predicate years of careful scholarship and reflection, and as it stands, *The Religious Orders in England* must be considered to be one of the most important works of its kind which has appeared in English for many years.

L. J. MACFARLANE

### INNOCENCE AND EXPERIENCE ABROAD

*The Quiet American*, by Graham Greene (Heinemann 13s 6d).

IF MR. T. S. ELIOT'S NOTES towards the definition of culture were commonly accepted one would describe Mr. Greene's new novel as a tragi-comedy of cultures in conflict. Formally it is more limited than *The End of the Affair*, which has a theme Hopkins would have appreciated. The anecdote is more simple. God does not intervene in this romance of a pair of "starcross'd" lovers, Fowler, a European reporter, and Pyle, an American civil servant, and the object of their desires, Phuong, an Annamite girl.

A footnote on the final page tells the reader that Mr. Greene spent three years creating the book. Set in Indo-China in time of war, the beauty of its writing, the assembling of its many contrasting scenes, the disciplining of the thought and fertility of imagination contained in it reveal the care the artist has given to its preparation and completion. His skill in composing in time and setting, his ability to refine and heighten the significance of his backgrounds and finely balance these with the flow of his narratives, and the spare incisiveness of his dialogue are not less than masterly. The grisly beauty one recalls from the paintings of Goya is evoked by descriptions of bodies, after ambush, floating on the surface of a canal and a square in Saigon after a "bomb incident"; Hogarth comes to mind in the "House of Five

Hundred Girls," and the sullen pain of Rembrandt's poor in a watch tower in occupied country where peasant soldiers wait while the Englishman and the American discuss political ideas, and communists skirmish in the darkness beyond. One thinks of Breugel's crowds in Mr. Greene's street scenes and of another artist, the film-maker, D. W. Griffith, when Fowler contemplates warfare from a vantage point in Phat Diem.

Fowler is middle-aged and sensitively aware of his years: he has lived through the decades of liberal fulfilment and exists, he believes, on a perimeter of history. An agnostic, his mind is clamorous with echoes of Christianity; he has read Pascal. All his sympathies are with the past of the Europe that is losing the war, his regrets are for his sins and the women who loved him and whom he abandoned. Characteristic of his craft is his attitude to politics:

"I'm a reporter. I am not *engagé*. . . . Isms and ocracies. Give me the facts. . . . Anyway the French are dying every day—that's not a mental concept. They aren't leading people on with half lies like your politicians—and ours. I've been in India, Pyle, and I know the harm liberals do. We haven't a liberal party any more—liberalism's infected all the other parties. We are all either liberal conservatives or liberal socialists: we all have good consciences. I'd rather be an exploiter who fights for what he exploits and dies with it."

In the evenings Fowler plays Quatre-Vingt-et-Un for drinks and smokes opium: for information, as distinct from the *communiqués* issued by "the authorities," he relies upon an intelligence service operated by a Goanese assistant. He is a good reporter. His sentimentality too is characteristic of his trade, and time of life, part of the proverbial cynicism of journalists which masks the chronic adolescence of many contemporary practitioners of the craft. Spiritually unkempt, physically exhausted, Fowler lives in the interesting condition of sloth that is the novitiate of anarchy and revolution. *Phuong* is necessary to his comfort.

With precise skill Mr. Greene "orchestrates" the girl's meeting with Pyle, associating her in the boy's mind with a visit to a military brothel and a sleazy cabaret performance. "This isn't suitable for *her*."

He is a sacrificial goat who inevitably will be killed: loaded with the naïve ideologies of popular culture, infatuated by the ponderous dronings of a fatuous "savant" who writes books with titles such as *The Advance of Red China*, *The Challenge of Democracy*, etc. ("He gets hold of an idea and then alters every situation to fit the idea") he has come to Indo-China to organise a Third Force. Intriguing with a local "baron" he unleashes blindly murderous forces.

To *Phuong*, Pyle's devotion is honourable, pure and alien. Fowler loves and hates the boy, seeing him as something like an innocent

destroying crew-cut cherub. When Phuong leaves the older man for marriage to the Bostonian, the reporter contemplates death as an anodyne for his egotistical tantrums. But it is Pyle's death he half-heartedly arranges with efficient assassins.

Patiently ruthless, Mr. Greene itemises the ingredients of the mischief Pyle has brought to the East. The boy, the love affair and the destruction of life and hope in warfare are set in the context of a mature European mind; in the sad realism of a reporter's vision, their innocence and cruelty ironically are illuminated.

The despair is, perhaps, the flaw in the creation of Fowler. The characteristics are true of Fleet Street, the mood, one feels, truer of a French intellectual. The journalist has seen many wars and has lived in an atmosphere of rumours, has sinned and does not know how to repent; in his despair he hunts a vision of truth, attacking, on his way, the evil illusions of an innocent whom he shrewishly envies and reasonably fears. Like Scobie and Bendrix, the responsible men in earlier novels, Fowler seeks real love. The author has a gift for giving clichés significance.

All Mr. Greene's novels since *The Man Within* are set in the contemporary world. The main characters in the earlier books were, in a way, his measuring rods for the civilisation that nearly twenty years ago made war. *The Quiet American* develops one of his consistent implicit themes; Fowler and Pyle may be measuring rods for the civilisation that made peace in 1945.

W. J. IGOE

## THE PROBLEM OF PAIN IN SCRIPTURE

*Providence and Suffering in the Old and New Testaments*, by Edmund F. Sutcliffe, S.J. (Nelson 15s).

THE READING PUBLIC of Catholic England lies deep in Fr. Sutcliffe's debt: the *Catholic Commentary* is his lasting monument—he was its Old Testament Editor and most diligent contributor. Ten years ago his *Old Testament and the Future Life* was published; his new book is on a related subject. Its theme is not twofold but one, and the surveyed field is one; the theme: suffering; the field: the Old Testament (for the helpful and devout chapter on New Testament teaching is little more than an appendix).

The work is addressed not to specialists but to the educated and interested. This general public will find useful summaries of pagan views in the first two (of ten) chapters. A sense of disproportion might have been avoided, space and understanding gained, had these interesting remarks been inlaid rather than juxtaposed. So for example the Greek view could have been set within a treatment of the later

Sapiential books. The observation is worth making because we have here a symptom of the learned author's approach to his subject. Fr. Sutcliffe is well aware of the importance of the historical method, of the development of Biblical thought in time's course and the consequently imperative duty of assigning dates to the literature, but seems reluctant to use it. There are indeed risks in the method but the risks must be accepted and one feels that the author has declined them. The reader is left with the impression that an inherently progressive, dynamic problem-solution has been treated statically. The grouping of related texts is undeniably of value, but a thematic presentation would live and move if it were historical also.

If we may take an outstanding example: one cannot believe it a matter of indifference to the significance of *Job* that the "happy-ever-after" epilogue might be a subsequent addition (cf. p. 111). Remove it, and the great argument regains its stature: *Job* becomes the soul of Israel in its darkest hour and in its finest moment: its solution, surrender. A peak of mysticism has been scaled blindly—for there was yet no sight of another world—and the climbing is itself part of the revelation of future life which came not suddenly but by such hard ways. The profound mysticism of the Old Testament was driving continuously to the thought of ultimate Union. Our Lord's appeal to *Exodus* for a proof of future life was not so surprising after all (Matt. 22: 32; cf. Exod. 3: 6).

The science of Biblical Theology is in its childhood; its destiny is sure. We hope these few remarks will not diminish Fr. Sutcliffe's notable contribution to its progress.

ALEXANDER JONES

### A SYMBOLIST OF GENIUS

*Paul Nash, The Portrait of an Artist*, by Anthony Bertram (Faber 42s).

IF ONE SAYS that this is a serious and conscientious biography of a considerable artist, one may seem to be damning it with faint praise. But there is so much impressionistic and slap-dash biography about, that it becomes necessary to emphasise that Mr. Bertram's book is not only cleanly, economically and, as occasion requires, eloquently written, but scrupulously edited as well. The references and indexing are all that the most exacting could require. The book is handsomely produced, although it would be easier reading if the many quotations from Nash's letters were printed in smaller type. The illustrations are a sufficient guide to the text, although only the frontispiece is in colour. Paul Nash was not primarily a colourist, but all the same, colour became more and more essential to his expression as he

moved forward to that meeting with Turner, which released the Apocalypse of his latest work. The book, therefore, will be more enjoyable if the reader has a volume of coloured reproductions beside him. There will always be plenty to say about Paul Nash; but Mr. Bertram and his publisher have set out to produce a standard biography and, all in all, they have succeeded.

It is, however, the biography or—to quote Mr. Bertram—the “Portrait” of an artist. It is Nash the dedicated painter and intrepid pioneer of vision, that concerns him. Those critics who still maintain that painting has nothing to do with anything except paint, will not be able to accept Mr. Bertram’s cautious but just valuation. Nash, he believes, was of the same “household” but not of the same genius as Blake. The difference, however, is vital. Blake was a genuine, though an unorthodox mystic; he lived continually on the further side of phenomena, and although what he set down must be judged as poetry or painting, it must also be judged as record. There is no evidence that Nash ever had mystical experience of this kind. He was exploring, but he was not coming back with a report. His art was a supremely imaginative symbol of what might be found on the other side; an artist’s guess, not a mystic’s stammer. He was, of course, in the general sense, a spiritual man; but he approached the “mystery of things” with an artist’s perception and invention. He did not attempt to follow any of the spiritual disciplines.

Mr. Bertram quotes M. Maritain—and here he cannot be quoted too often—to expose this error. The more rigid may maintain that Nash’s painting was a spiritual cheat. But we are left with a symbolist of genius, working in the main within the English romantic tradition. This he memorably enriched. He demonstrated with the Pre-Raphaelites, who inspired his earlier vision, that art need not dispense with anecdote, and with every good artist of any school or period that it cannot dispense with objects. He was not what is generally called a “painty” painter, and he did not start out with any very remarkable gifts. But he wonderfully developed what gifts he had, and it may be that only his tragically early death deprived us of a great master. Mr. Bertram knew Nash well, and it might have been better if he had made this a little clearer in the preface. His constant use of the first person singular in the writing of a properly objective study can be justified by personal acquaintance; without this intimate knowledge, it tends to be intrusive.

ROBERT SPEAIGHT



## MONASTIC LITURGIES

*Liturgies of the Religious Orders*, by Archdale A. King (Longmans 50s).

THIS VOLUME is one of a quartet which when completed will deal with the Rites of the Western Church and form a companion to a learned work already published and dealing with the Rites of the Eastern Church. Although it is in point of time the first to be published, it is in fact the second of the series as planned. It takes as its subject the liturgies of the great monastic Orders and consists of five chapters dealing with the Rites of the Carthusians, Cistercians, Carmelites and Dominicans with a lengthy appendix on the Gilbertine Rite. Each of these chapters was submitted to a competent member of the Order concerned and each chapter is amply illustrated by excellent reproductions mostly from photographs taken by the author himself.

The general scheme of the work is described by the author himself in his preface: each of the chapters contains a brief sketch of the Order under consideration: some account of the churches built for its liturgical worship: a history of the origins and development of the rite: the liturgical year: chant: ornaments of the church and ministers; and, finally, the rite as it appears today in both formulas and ceremonies, with, as far as is possible, the story of their beginnings and showing in what particulars they differ from the Roman rite as exemplified in the *Pian missal*.

Such a comprehensive project will obviously prove a boon to the scholar and expert and open a wide field for further research. Indeed the book might be not unjustly described as a source-book containing much useful and original matter supported with copious references to the sources, with much additional matter in the several appendices and ample bibliography after each chapter, not to mention a very exhaustive index at the end.

To the general or average reader and to the beginner, however, it could conceivably appear somewhat less attractive, possibly too erudite and even forbidding in the wealth of its learning. None the less it is unquestionably a boon and a great work which will repay patient study and comparison with the Roman rite in its development and present form though possibly the reader may feel inclined to say at the end "Thank God for the Roman rite."

To the reader not familiar with Latin and French, particularly old French, the author's practice of incorporating lengthy quotations in Latin in the text without translation or explanation may prove somewhat irritating and even baffling, while some of the phrases of frequent occurrence seem decidedly pedantic; e.g., *Pian missal*, *Henrician plunderers*, *Elian tradition*, *alleluiatic verse*, *Marial in character*, *regulative power*, etc.



But for all that we have here a work of immense learning and accurate scholarship and a valuable contribution to the history and development of the liturgy in rites rarely seen by the majority of the faithful yet bearing marked affinity to the Roman rite. It is a pregnant and suggestive work which can be heartily recommended to all who are interested in the study of the development of the liturgy in its various branches and one which whets the appetite for the further volumes promised in the same series.

R. C. CLARKE

### CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

*Britain Between the Wars 1918-1940*, by Charles Loch Mowat (Methuen 30s).

THE DIFFICULTY of writing contemporary history, as the author of this excellent study points out in his preface, is twofold: the danger of the writer being swamped by the overwhelming amount of material available, and that of being led by too near-sighted a view into a merely partisan narrative of events. Mr. Mowat has been remarkably successful in surmounting both. He has read widely and absorbed well, and his impartiality is pleasantly unstrained. Moreover he has an eye for a telling phrase: Neville Chamberlain's "tunnel vision" is an example; or when he speaks of the Labour Party's "Russia complex" in the period 1922-25 "alternatively fanned by Tory gibes and cooled by Russian rebuffs." He insists very rightly on the importance of the Spanish Civil War as a factor in the political life of this country and how in particular it brought about that curious change of sides in the matter of peace and war between the left and right in Britain. Non-intervention and pacifism, from having been the slogans of the Socialists from 1936 or so onwards, passed to the Government. Incidentally he points out, surprising as it may seem, that the terms left and right were hardly known here in the political sense before this date. He also interestingly brings out, in dealing with the Washington Conference of 1922, the part played by Canada—"in its self-chosen (if seldom effective) role as mediator between Great Britain and the United States"—in persuading this country to break the Anglo-Japanese alliance. America alone has generally been blamed, or otherwise, for having been responsible for insisting on our taking that highly questionable step.

The author even manages to maintain a cool head when dealing with Irish affairs, a creditable achievement indeed, although in the opinion of this reviewer he allots rather more space to events connected with that country than the scope of his work, taken as a whole, demands. In the matter of the Treaty of Versailles hardly enough is said

about the French standpoint. Foch's name is not mentioned at all, nor his "left bank" policy. Nor is the question of the unity of Germany considered, which Jacques Bainville and his school held to be the essence of the whole problem. (It should be said in this connection that no books other than English ones, except for official State papers, are cited in the bibliography.) All of which makes the author underestimate the effect which the scuttling of the German fleet at Scapa had upon the French opinion at the time.

In his estimation of the various public figures who held the stage of world affairs during the Twenties and Thirties Mr. Mowat shows himself on the whole to be a lenient judge. In the case of Lloyd George he might even be said to carry leniency too far. Can it be justifiably said for instance of him in connection with the sale of Honours scandal under the Coalition Government that "Lloyd George was perhaps cynical and careless, but nothing more than that"? Possibly; although a recent book on Maundy Gregory, his chief henchman in the affair, hardly leaves one with that impression. And would his presence as a member of any Government from 1922 onwards have been either possible, or if possible, desirable? Mr. Mowat evidently thinks, yes. The question of desirability need not be argued here, but when one recalls the chilling silence with which the Tory back-benches were wont to greet the ex-Prime Minister's rare interventions in the House during all those years—or at least from 1931—it remains clear that no leader of the party, even had he wished, could have offered him a place in the Cabinet except at the risk of his own political life. But neither MacDonald, Baldwin nor (still less) Chamberlain ever contemplated taking any such step. It was not until 1940, when Churchill, who alone had never wavered in his admiration for Lloyd George, was making up his coalition Cabinet that the invitation was made and, and not entirely for reasons of old age, as averred at the time, was refused.

There are a few small errors and misprints to which attention should be called: what Adam Smith said was: "There is a deal of ruin in a nation," not, "there is a *great* deal" (p. 171); "*leafy* Bucks" surely, not "beechy" (p. 228); in Scotland, as in England, soccer is the greater draw; Murrayfield is of less importance to the football-loving public than Ibrox Park or Hampden (p. 248). Lord Amulree's family name is Mackenzie (p. 401).

But in reading any history of one's own times one is always struck afresh by the never-failing importance of the personal factor. Principles count for much, but in the end it is Cleopatra's nose that governs. Up to July 1938, we read, the Labour Party went on voting against rearmament, or against the estimates of the service departments—which meant the same thing. Then, by a small majority they decided not to go on voting thus, but to abstain instead. But even then, it

appears, Attlee, Morrison and Greenwood were in favour of continuing to vote against any form of rearmament out of hatred of Chamberlain. So it is, and this is but one example of something that can be matched over and over again in any or every party, that attachment to principle is as nothing when weighed against personal likes or dislikes. It affects all judgment and undermines justice itself. A murder has been committed: I condemn it. Or: Tell me first who the murderer is, then I will pass judgment.

JOHN McEWEN

### EXISTENTIALISM AND ROMANCE

*The Sleeping Beauty*, by Ralph Harper; Foreword by M. C. D'Arcy S.J. (The Harvill Press 10s 6d).

MR. HARPER'S BOOK is outstanding in the particularity of its analysis. He does not share, however, the prevailing passion for linguistic analysis, and his own conception of philosophy is very different. "Experience teaches man much, poetry even more, and philosophy confirms as it reflects on both."

He has accordingly taken a fable as the setting for his exploration of the human situation. By re-telling the story at a more reflective level of discourse he enhances its meaning so that it assumes the dimensions of a parable embracing the longing of mankind for fulfilment and the coming of the true Prince. The central theme of the book is the abiding sense of "presence," an existential conception which Mr. Harper derives from Gabriel Marcel. Marcel is for him the philosopher *par excellence*.

Mr. Harper's affinities therefore are with what has been called "the religious wing of Existentialism": with Martin Buber, Emil Brunner, Louis Lavelle, and not least with that most sensitive of poet-philosophers, Max Picard. There is here no school of philosophy in the strict sense; and even the title "Existentialist" is misleading. Mr. Harper prefers Marcel's word "concrete" as a descriptive label. What is held in common is a method; and it is in pursuance of this method that Mr. Harper entitles himself to accept the poetic justice of *The Sleeping Beauty* as an authentic deliverance. Hope, he says, is "the recognition of an order of fullness and presence, which is 'in connivance' with me." The emptiness, therefore, of contemporary life is something in the nature of a delinquency. To fill the emptiness that aches one needs "to be present, to be ready to dispose of oneself, to give oneself, to make a present of oneself"; and this disposability is required likewise of the philosopher as he attempts to extract for his own purposes that which is concrete in personal human experience. The test of authenticity

will be for him his own integrity. The existential categories are "not at our fingertips," as Mr. Harper puts it. Their exploration requires "tenderness and patience and minuteness." These qualities he has detected in the work of Marcel. The reader will have no reason to lament their absence in Mr. Harper's penetrating and original contribution to the philosophy of existence.

Commenting on that curious homeland of Heidegger, a land not of promise but of proximity, Mr. Harper remarks: "This is not moral mystery; it is rather noetic, metaphysical. It is quite different from Marcel's conception of at-homeness as a moral readiness, an attentiveness to others." The welcome return, after a long exile, of this *moral* dimension is a notable feature of the new existentialism, and holds the promise of its eventual reconciliation with the traditional philosophy.

*The Sleeping Beauty* is a fascinating book, far-reaching in its range of interests and suggestiveness, a deeply sincere and minute diagnosis of the prevailing desolation, waste, alienation, and emptiness. It is a book to read, to possess. The publishers are to be congratulated on having made this work available at so moderate a price.

J. S. DICKIE

## SHORTER NOTICES

*The Holy Bible*, translated by Ronald Knox (Burns and Oates 30s).

THOSE who already possess the three-decker Knox Bible will naturally ask why they should buy a copy of the one-volume edition. The answer is twofold. First of all, convenience, since the definitive edition is slightly smaller in bulk than a single volume of the original Old Testament; and second, interest. Those who are given to that sort of thing might well institute a new Catholic Parlour Game, trying to "Spot the Changes" and wondering why. The first such change occurs in the very second verse where "brooded the Spirit of God" has become "stirred the breath of God" (this is presumably the change which Mgr. Knox publicly announced that he would not have dared to make had he not been "gingered up to it" by one of his revisers).

On the whole—and it is a remarkable tribute to the care which Mgr. Knox took in his unsupervised translation of the Old Testament—the changes do not appear to be numerous (comparatively speaking) or of any far-reaching significance. Yet the translation has been worked over by scholars and critics of no small erudition and orthodoxy and, whilst the translator continues to insist on the debt he owes to them,

no one can fail to see in every chapter and indeed in every verse, the authentic stamp of a painstaking scholar and a fastidious stylist.

As for those who do not possess the three-decker original they, of course, should not even ask why. No Catholic home will henceforward be complete without the Knox Bible.

*The Meaning of the Monastic Life*, by Louis Bouyer (Burns and Oates 21s).

THE PURPOSE of this book is primarily to point out to monks that their vocation in the Church is not, and never has been, a special vocation . . . it is the vocation of the baptised man carried to the farthest limits of its irresistible demands . . . In every Christian vocation lies the germ of a monastic vocation." Fr. Bouyer's statement of his purpose is obviously going to involve him in some difficulty when he comes to deal with the vocation to the non-monastic state and it is a difficulty which he does not altogether escape. The monastic life is seen as essentially a search for God and to that end alone are all monastic observances directed. This life leads a man to a share in the angelic life (and how right is the author to treat that phrase as one of deep meaning and not as a pointless metaphor), to a dwelling in an earthly reflection of light inaccessible, a life *in* contemplation even if no specifically mystical experience be granted. In tracing this ideal, Fr. Bouyer draws largely on his knowledge of the Scriptures and of the traditional thought of the Church. He does not fail to stress that this movement of the soul to God involves dying that we may have life and he sees clearly that there is no Christianity without the Cross.

*Neglected Saints*, by E. I. Watkin (Sheed and Ward 12s 6d).

THE SAINTS saved from neglect by Mr. E. I. Watkin well illustrate this thesis that sanctity is far and away more entertaining than wickedness. Fullness of being and richness of life belong to the holy: the bad are near to nonentity, and their existence is drab and dull. All those chosen for rescue from oblivion well repay the study that has gone into the writing of their lives—Martin of Tours, soldier turned pacifist, Jordan of Saxony who gained the medieval universities for the Dominicans, Thomas of Villanueva, almsgiver *par excellence*, a most attractive Dominican Tertiary, Osanna of Mantua, and half a dozen others of a like originality.

The stories are well told, though jerkily at times. Their interest is increased by the shrewd and wholesome comments of Mr. Watkin on pacifism, friendship between men and women, the Inquisition, saints' *Lives* good and bad, miracles, the liturgy, and other such topics. And,



his study ranging from the fourth to the seventeenth century, he has opportunity, which he takes well, to illuminate the general history of the Church.

*Courtesy and Allegory in Spenser*, by H. C. Chang (Edinburgh University Press 18s).

THIS IS A CURIOUS and interesting work, in which a Chinese scholar presents a group of essays on two books of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. Rarely indeed has a representative of a differing culture shown so much sympathy and penetration in criticising the *Faerie Queene* as does this Chinese scholar, who might fairly be supposed the most remote of all from a full comprehension. How alien the Chinese conception of figurative composition is from our own is illustrated by the "allegory" translated at the beginning of this book; and yet, in his analysis of Spenser's conception of Courtesy, by equating it with that which makes a man civilised, he demonstrates a sympathetic understanding which few French critics—to take a European example—seem to possess. Moreover, only a language teacher could appreciate what it must have meant to acquire the command of sources and parallels which Mr. Chang possesses. Yet, for the full exposition of Spenser's thought, something more is needed than literary knowledge, penetration and sympathy. Guyon and Calidore—Mr. Chang discusses only these two—were Aristotelian, romantic, pastoral, all this; but they were also Christian virtues, and when one does not reckon on this fact, one can never reach to the heart of Spenser's mystery. But to this comment nearly all Spenser's critics are equally exposed.

*Just Half a World Away: My Search for the New India*, by Jean Lyon (Hutchinson 21s).

THE PUBLISHER'S CLAIMS are well-founded. This is indeed "the record of an observant, humorous and open-minded woman with an exceptional gift for understanding the Asiatic mind, arising partly from the fact that she was born and reared in China, but mainly from a natural and spontaneous gift of sympathy towards a foreign people."

Unhappily, it is no peculiarity of this "search for the New India" that the impact of Christianity, past or present, on these hundreds of millions is hardly considered.



ONE of the great occupational risks of business life under the pressure of to-day is that the practical man of affairs neglects his outside reading, and all too easily falls into a narrow circle of immediate preoccupations. There is always loss in this, and the Catholic business or professional man, as a member of the Church Universal, has a particularly strong reason for keeping his mind open to wider horizons. Certainly it was never more necessary than now to follow world happenings. A direct chain of causes and effects ties every business to economical changes in the world, which are themselves as often the consequence as the cause of changes in men's political and social ideas. These ideas in their turn come out of the religions, or irreligions, of contemporary man.

In many countries the Catholic Church is at the heart of the battle of ideas. Cardinal Manning's saying that "all great quarrels between men are at bottom theological" suggests that there is, in fact, no better starting-point or background for understanding the modern world than a Catholic one. Because of this approach and background,

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